

**AN ANALYSIS OF DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN NAMIBIAN  
PRIMARY EDUCATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING**

**Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master's  
in Education in the Department of Policy Studies at Stellenbosch University**



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**December 2019**

## **Declaration**

By submitting this thesis, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own original work that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (except where explicitly is indicated otherwise) and I declare that this dissertation has not been submitted previously for any degree or qualification at any university.

.....

**Saara Taleni Akumbi**

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**Date**

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## **Dedication**

To my mother, Hilma Nickodemus, who inspired me not to give up in the midst of pressure and difficulties because the good life is always gained after struggle, perseverance and hard work.

## **Acknowledgement**

I am deeply grateful to the Almighty God, for His grace, protection, provision of wisdom and assurance for the completion of this study. Glory be to Him!

My appreciation is extended to my supervisor, the Distinguished Professor Yusef Waghid, for his constant support and guidance throughout the writing process. I feel privileged to have been supervised by him.

Special thanks to Rejoice Malisa, Ben Saxby, Ntombi Khumalo and Dr Monica Zembere for their unwavering support and encouragement, which strengthened and enabled me to overcome challenges during the writing process. The Almighty will reward them on my behalf.

My sincere acknowledgement is forwarded to Mundeda Simukungwe, Marian Philipus, Everina Nakambale Ndaku and Refuoe Molepe, for their words of encouragement, expression of love and goodwill, which gave me comfort and a sense of belonging that undoubtedly contributed to the completion of this project.

I do not forget my children, Tauno and Ndeshipewa, for being able to stand on their own when I was studying.

My appreciation is also extended to Ms Jackie Viljoen, who edited my document – thank you indeed.

Finally, I would like to say to the above-mentioned people that I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am.

## Abstract

The Namibian education system has not made significant efforts to promote democratic citizenship education (DCE) in the country, due to unequal opportunities towards quality education. Therefore, this study sought to understand the implications of democratic citizenship education for teaching and learning in Namibian primary education, from 1993 to 2017. This was done through the analysis of major education policies that support teaching and learning, in order to understand how these policies contribute to the promotion of democratic citizenship education in the country. The analysis was guided by interpretive theory as methodology. At the same time, conceptual, deconstructive and document analyses were employed as the methods to analyse education policies. This approach (methodology and method) assisted me both to establish meanings of democratic citizenship education in the Namibian context and to determine what is delaying the promotion of democratic citizenship education in Namibia.

However, this study revealed that schools in rural areas are operating under poor conditions due to a lack of teaching and learning resources, which lead to poor quality education, while schools in urban areas have adequate resources that ensure good quality education. The disparities in the quality of education are contrary to the principles of DCE. Therefore, for the realisation of democratic citizenship education in Namibia to take place, there is a need to implement compensatory programmes that give schools in rural areas proportionately more teaching and learning resources to put them on an equal footing with those in urban areas. Moreover, at a conceptual level, the Ministry of Education needs to prepare future citizens for democratic deliberation by both engaging them in decision-making concerning their lives as well as introducing them to *ubuntu* values, which can guide them to become responsible citizens.

## Keywords

Democracy, citizenship education, policy, deliberation, primary education, Namibia, *ubuntu*

## Opsomming

Die Namibiese onderwysstelsel het nie beduidende pogings aangewend om demokratiese burgerskaponderrig in die land te bevorder nie weens ongelyke geleenthede wat betref gehalteonderwys. Hierdie navorsing het dus gepoog om die implikasies van demokratiese burgerskaponderwys vir onderrig en leer in Namibiese primêre onderwys van 1993 tot 2017 te begryp. Dit is gedoen deur die ontleding van belangrike onderwysbeleide wat onderrig en leer ondersteun, ten einde te begryp hoe hierdie beleide tot die bevordering van demokratiese burgerskaponderwys in die land bydra. Die analise is gelei deur onderwysfilosofie as benadering en interpretatiewe teorie as metodologie. Terselfdertyd is konseptuele, dekonstruktiewe en dokumentanalise gebruik as die metodes om onderwysbeleide te analiseer. Hierdie metodologie het my gehelp om die betekenis van demokratiese burgerskaponderwys teen die Namibiese agtergrond te bepaal en om vas te stel waardeur die bevordering van demokratiese burgerskaponderwys in Namibië vertraag word.

Hierdie navorsing het aan die lig gebring dat skole in landelike gebiede in swak omstandighede funksioneer weens 'n gebrek aan hulpbronne vir onderrig en leer, wat lei tot onderwys van swak gehalte, terwyl skole in stedelike gebiede voldoende hulpbronne het wat onderwys van goeie gehalte verseker. Die ongelykhede in die gehalte van onderwys is in stryd met die beginsels van demokratiese burgerskaponderrig. Vir die verwesenliking van demokratiese burgerskaponderwys in Namibië is dit dus nodig om kompenserende programme te implementeer wat aan skole in landelike gebiede proporsioneel meer onderrig- en leerhulpbronne sal gee om hulle op gelyke voet met dié in stedelike gebiede te bring. Daarbenewens moet die Ministerie van Onderwys toekomstige burgers vir demokratiese oorlegpleging voorberei deur hulle beide te betrek by besluitneming rakende hulle lewens en hulle aan *ubuntu*-waardes bekend te stel, wat hulle op die pad na verantwoordelike burgerskap kan lei.

## **Abbreviations and Acronyms**

ETSIP	Education and Training Sector Improvement Program
DCE	Democratic Citizenship Education
GRN	Government of the Republic of Namibia
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
NIED	National Institute for Education Development
TEA	Toward Education for All
MoBEC	Ministry of Basic Education and Culture
MoE	Ministry of Education
RMS	Rhenish Missionary Society
ROSE	Reform of Secondary Education Policy

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## **Chapter: 1 Introduction and background of the study**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Namibia, as a democratic country, has been striving to shift its education system from an undemocratic education system to a democratic citizenship education system. Democratic citizenship education (DCE), as described by Gutmann and Thompson (2004:35), is an educational system that aims to prepare all children to become free and equal citizens. Furthermore, Gutmann (1993, cited in Curren, 2007:159) points out that DCE develops democratic citizens who have the will and ability to manage their own lives and participate in governing their society. Therefore, it was necessary for the Namibian government to introduce DCE, and abolish the undemocratic education system, which was established by colonialists who ruled Namibia for many years, in order to develop a democratic society.

Namibia was first under German colonial rule for 30 years (1884–1915). At that time, Namibia was called German South West Africa. Thereafter, South Africa came to control Namibia for 75 years (1915–1990) during which time it was known as South-West Africa (Shanyanana, 2011:3). Through hardship and sacrifices, Namibians fought to liberate themselves from the South African colonial regime and to gain political independence on 21 March 1990 (Nujoma, 2001:439). Before independence, the Namibian education system was aimed at promoting apartheid (Goosen & Wietersheim, 2001:191). It was for that reason that the Bantu Education Act (Act No. 47 of 1953) was introduced in 1953 (Union of South Africa, 1953) which promoted racism, discrimination and all forms of oppressive practices, instead of providing the necessary human and physical resources to strengthen impartial social and economic development. Furthermore, education was stratified along racial and ethnic lines with great differences in the distribution of resources and the quality of education provided to specific groups. According to Goosen and Wietersheim (2001:190), African learners were provided with the lowest standard of education, followed by coloured learners with a slightly better standard, while white learners received education of the best quality. These educational levels demonstrate the absence of DCE in education policies at that time.

After gaining independence in 1990, the first priority of the newly elected political government of the Republic of Namibia was to emancipate its people from all forms of oppression from the past (Goosen & Wietersheim, 2001:190). This is because, democracy should not emulate the unreasonable desire of the enemies, but it should promote reason and tolerance, while fighting cynicism and differences (MoBEC, 1993:25, The Association for Education in Citizenship, 1936:7). In order to achieve that, the democratic government of the Republic of Namibia put into place policies and programmes in an attempt to unify a previously divided society (Ministry of

Basic Education and Culture [MoBEC], 1993:25). In that respect, the education system was reformed to accommodate all Namibian citizens, irrespective of their origin, tribe, colour or age. In 1993, the democratic government introduced an education policy reform titled *Toward Education for All* (Goosen & Wietersheim, 2001:15). The main aim of the Toward Education for All policy (TEA) was to transform the education system from elite education for some to education for all Namibians (MoBEC, 1993:2). Under that policy, four goals were formulated. These goals are access, equity, quality and democracy (MoBEC, 1993:24), which are the foundations of DCE in Namibia.

In 2010, a new National Curriculum for Basic Education was introduced, which comprised the Social Science learning area (National Institute for Education Development [NIED], 2010:13). Social Science is the basic learning area for DCE, and comprises subjects such as Environmental Studies, Social Studies, Religious and Moral Education, Life Skills, Geography, History, and Developmental Studies. The focus of these subjects is to educate Namibians to become active citizens and to understand the development of society, the system of globalisation, and the value of human, democracy and environmental affairs (NIED, 2010:13). It also concentrates on the development of good personal values, which is one of the characteristics of a responsible citizen (NIED, 2010:13). Through Social Science subjects, learners investigate and become aware of relationships in social, cultural, economic, civic and political domains, and the connections between people and their environment (NIED, 2010:13). In 2015, the current National Curriculum for Basic Education was introduced. One of the aims of the current curriculum is to promote democratic principles and practices, and to enable learners to think scientifically to solve problems in their everyday lives (NIED, 2015:10). It indicates that these curricula are supporting the TEA policy to promote DCE in Namibia.

In 2013, a policy for Universal Primary Education was introduced (Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, 2012). This policy provides the right to all pre-primary and primary school learners to attend school free of charge. In addition, in 2016, a Universal Secondary Education policy was released according to which provision is made for free secondary school education (Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture 2016). The universal education policies (primary and secondary) in Namibia are aimed at addressing financial challenges faced by some learners and which force some of them to drop out of school before completing primary and secondary education.

The government of the Republic of Namibia is dedicated to emancipating and balancing the lives of its people by providing access to equal and quality education for all (MoBEC, 1993:26). That is a central aim of DCE. However, the current situation in Namibian primary schools still displays an

educational landscape devoid of DCE. I was therefore interested to analyse the Namibian primary school policies that support teaching and learning in order to determine whether they promote DCE in the country.

## **1.2 Problem statement and research question**

In the introduction, I stated that the Namibian government introduced the TEA policy in 1993. The goals of the TEA policy are access, equity, quality and democracy, which form the basis of DCE in Namibia. After passing this policy, several similar and complementary policies were passed to help achieve these goals. These policies are:

- Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) (Government of the Republic of Namibia [GRN], 2007);
- Information and Communication Technology Policy for Education (ICT) (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2005);
- Ministry of Education Strategic Plan 2012–2017 (Strategic Plan 2012–017) (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2012).

These policies were passed to support the TEA policy in cultivating DCE in Namibia. Ideally, the Namibian government aims to transform the lives of people in the country through comprehensive education reform.

However, the TEA policy has not yet yielded the intended results, as schools in Namibia are still stratified according to poor, better and best in terms of access to resources, with most of poor schools being found in rural areas. Katjavivi (2016), speaker of the National assembly of the Republic of Namibia, in his speech at the Forum of the Commonwealth Council on Education, states that schools in rural and remote areas of Namibia suffer a shortage of qualified teachers, permanent classrooms, ICT equipment and textbooks. Most rural schools do not have libraries and laboratories. The better and best schools are found in semi-urban and urban areas. The better schools operate with moderate amounts of resources, while the best schools are those that have no shortage of resources. This is contrary to the principles of DCE, because there is no equity in educational opportunities for all the Namibian children.

Therefore, in this study, I analysed the education policies that support teaching and learning, specifically in primary schools, in order to determine whether they contribute to the promotion of DCE in terms of access, equity, quality and democracy.

The main research question was:

**Do the education policies that support teaching and learning in primary schools in Namibia promote democratic citizenship education in the country?**

The sub-questions were:

- Do the Namibian primary education policies explicitly articulate democratic citizenship education, which enables learners to develop emancipatory abilities to be active and responsible citizens in the future?
- What are the challenges that hinder the successful implementation of democratic citizenship education in Namibia?
- What policy changes are necessary in teaching and learning to promote democratic citizenship education in Namibia?

### **1.3 Aim of the study**

The aim of this study is to analyse the education policies that support teaching and learning in Namibian primary schools in order to determine the nature of DCE in the Namibian context, and to understand how these policies contribute to the promotion of DCE in primary schools. DCE in the Namibian context is interpreted as relating to DCE theories, in order to determine the challenges and shortcomings that delay the promotion of DCE in Namibian primary schools. I have presented my findings on how democratic citizenship is articulated in the Namibian primary school policies, and made recommendations for improvement.

### **1.4 Objective of the study**

The followings are the objectives of the current study

- to analyse the theoretical concept of DCE and establish an understanding of its meaning;
- to analyse the Namibian primary school policies and determine the nature of DCE in the Namibian context;
- to determine whether the Namibian primary school policies contribute to the promotion of DCE in the country;
- to determine whether the Namibian primary education policies explicitly articulate democratic citizenship education, which enables learners to develop emancipatory abilities to be active and responsible citizens in the future; and



- to identify the shortcomings in the Namibian primary education policies that delay the promotion of DCE.

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

The reviewed literature indicates that studies that have been conducted on DCE in the Namibian education are those of Shanyanana (2011), *Education for democratic citizenship and cosmopolitanism: The case for the Republic of Namibia*; and of Kandumbu (2005), *Exploring education in Namibia in terms of democratic change*. There has no study as yet been conducted on the implications of DCE for teaching and learning, specifically at the primary level. Therefore, this research is necessary because it will identify challenges that hinder the effective implementation of DCE at primary level, whilst paving the way for the government to address these challenges. In this respect, the findings and recommendations from this research will contribute significantly to the improvement and promotion of citizenship education in teaching and learning.

### **1.6 Motivation of the study**

In the preceding sections, I have explained how colonialists were misgoverning Namibia and how the education system was unfairly administered with unequal opportunities granted along racial lines. Before Namibian independence, DCE did not have a place in school policies or curricula, since the aim of the education system was to limit Namibians' thinking capacities and their potential in all areas of their lives (Union of South Africa, 1953). During the colonial era, the Namibian people were not provided with equal opportunities to quality education (Goosen & Wietersheim, 2001:90). It is for this reason that the democratic government of the Republic of Namibia is currently making efforts to implement education policies for the promotion of equitable access to quality education for all, and to strengthen democracy in the country. These policies are aimed at promoting DCE in Namibia. However, DCE in Namibia is still underdeveloped, due to unequal opportunities towards quality education.

Katjavivi (2016), in his speech at the Forum of the Commonwealth Council on Education, emphasises that schools in rural and remote areas of Namibia face a big challenge in terms of a shortage of qualified teachers, textbooks, permanent classrooms and ICT equipment. On the same note, Shusko (2015) indicates that schools in Namibia face a big challenge in terms of a shortage of resources allocated to them. As a result, science teachers at some schools do not do science experiments due to a lack of equipment. She also observes that some schools do not have enough textbooks, desks, chairs and permanent classrooms. As a Namibian primary school teacher for many years, I share similar experiences with Katjavivi and Shusko, and support their findings.

Katjavivi and Shusko's findings, and my own experience, motivated me to analyse the Namibian primary school policies that guide teaching and learning, and to determine whether these policies promote DCE in the country.

## **1.7 Research approach and methodology**

Any research should have a procedure in order to answer the main question of the study. Such a procedure should include the research approach and methodology. In the next sections, I therefore discuss the research approach and methodology.

### **1.7.1 Research approach**

This study is a philosophical inquiry, since it concentrates on clarification and seeks an understanding of concepts regarding education practices. According to Heyting, Lenzen and White (2001:19), analytical philosophers of education are interested in conceptual clarification and in the disclosure of unclear theories, not for their own sakes, but because of the understanding that they create regarding educational policies and practices in order to bring about improvement. Philosophers of education are interested in seeking clarity regarding educational matters and finding out how things are done in a particular educational institution (Hirst & White, 1998:37). Therefore, in this study, the philosophy of education helped to clarify and bring an understanding of the concept of DCE and how democratic citizenship is articulated in the Namibian primary school policies.

### **1.7.2 Research methodology**

The methodology of this study is interpretive theory, and conceptual, deconstruction and document analyses as methods. Therefore, the next section discusses how the interpretive theory was employed in this study.

#### ***1.7.2.1 Interpretive theory***

This study is grounded in an interpretive paradigm for the reason that an interpretive paradigm helped me to gain an understanding and find the meaning of DCE in Namibian primary school policies. For Tshabangu (2015:40), interpretive researchers seek to understand the participants they are studying through the meaning that people connect to their social worlds. Tshabangu (2015:50) further emphasises that words and actions of participants establish meanings, which lead to an understanding of the world in which they live. Newton (1986:3) specifies the task of interpretation as to convey the meaning of the literary text. Hence, interpretation is the suitable paradigm for this study, since a close study of the Namibian education policies allowed me to establish an

understanding of the meaning of DCE in the Namibian context, and determine whether there are significant governmental attempts to promote DCE equitably in the country.

According to Waghid (2002:46), an interpretive inquiry emphasises phenomenological and hermeneutical inquiries. A phenomenological inquiry deals with interpreting the human experiences, perceptions, attitudes and behaviours, while a hermeneutical inquiry deals with interpreting texts. Neuman (2011:101) refers to hermeneutics as a method of inquiry related to interpretive social science that emerged from religious and literal studies and textual materials, in which an intensive study of a text and the related components can reveal a clear meaning. Higgs (1995:12) understands hermeneutics as being associated with historical and literal texts. History helps to bring an understanding of a present situation. Therefore, for this study, hermeneutics is the suitable method of inquiry to use in order to understand the history of the Namibian education system and understand the meaning of DCE in the current Namibian primary school policies.

## **1.8 Research methods**

Dawson (2009:27) refers to the research method as the techniques to be used to collect data. She further provides examples of methods such as interviews, focus groups, questionnaires and participant observation. On the same note, Brynard, Hanekom and Brynard (2014:40) provide similar examples, and for them the most commonly used techniques of data collection are an exploration of relevant literature, interviews, questions and observations. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011:128) give examples of methods, such as simulations, role playing, tests, personal constructs, biographies and case studies. Cohen et al. (2011) also include interviews, questionnaires and observation as methods. Therefore, in this study, I used conceptual analysis, deconstructive analysis and document analysis as methods.

### **1.8.1 Conceptual analysis**

A conceptual analysis is a philosophical technique used to clarify the meanings of concepts. According to Mouton (1996:116), a conceptual analysis focuses on the specification of the meaning of the concept. Since people attach more than one meaning to a concept, it is important to specify exactly what meaning we use in context, in order to understand what we are talking about (Mukwambo, Ngozo & Chikunda, 2015:189). For the current study, I used conceptual analysis to analyse the concept of DCE in order to understand its meaning and purpose. At the same time, conceptual analysis helped me to analyse the Namibian primary school policies in order to understand how they guide DCE in teaching and learning. Hirst and White (1998:121) have given

the function of conceptual analysis as to differentiate the use of terms by bringing illumination or by removing confusion, and more specifically, by clarifying what is being said. In that respect, Mouton (1996:114) says that, at an early stage, it is important to familiarise oneself with the most important theories, that relate to the research problem in order to establish the meaning of the concepts in the problem statement. I therefore first familiarised myself with the theories related to DCE, in order to establish the meaning and clarification of concepts, so that I could use it as a theoretical framework to analyse the Namibian primary school policies.

### **1.8.2 Deconstructive analysis**

I applied deconstructive analysis as a method in order to question the meaning of DCE, which is absent from the Namibian primary school policies. According to Waghid (2004:14), deconstruction searches for meanings beyond the text, or meanings, which are not conventionally considered. I therefore searched for the meaning of DCE in education policies, which is excluded from the education policies.

### **1.8.3 Document analysis**

Since documents are the main source of information in this study, content analysis was used as a technique. Content analysis helps a researcher to see and reveal the meanings within the communication source (Neuman, 2011:362). In this study, I used content analysis, which enabled me to establish an understanding of the meaning of DCE within the Namibian primary school policies. Wagner, Kawulich and Garner (2012:148) refer to document analysis as a coherent and theoretical method, which employs procedures and techniques for discovering, revealing, determining and analysing documents for their applicability, value and meaning. They further explain the word 'document' as a term used in research to include any kind of text, be it paintings, historical writings, governmental records, mass media, novels, plays and drawings. According to McCulloch (2004:7), documents are the most important means of communication through which we can get an understanding of how society has developed and how it is progressing as it does so. I therefore analysed the education policies for teaching and learning, through which I got an understanding of how DCE is being implemented in Namibian primary schools. These policies gave me a historical background to DCE in the Namibian context.

In most cases, the validity of documents as sources of information for research is questionable in terms of authenticity, representativeness and mostly credibility. Expert professionals, who are

impartial and who write information, which is free from ambiguity, write the education policies that are the main sources of this study. This increases the validity of the information they produce.

### **1.9 The scope of the study**

This study is limited primarily to the analysis of education policies that regulate teaching and learning in Namibian primary schools, in order to determine how DCE manifests in those policies. This is because the structure of this educational model (i.e. DCE) in education policies influences its implementation across teaching and learning.

### **1.10 Limitation of the study**

The scope of this study limited me to focus on analysing education policies that support teaching and learning at primary level in order to understand how these policies contribute to the promotion of DCE. One limiting factor is, therefore, that I was not able to go inside the classrooms and observe how DCE is implemented, because my focus was on analysing policies only. This means that I did not conduct any interviews, since the focus is on the policies, not on the people behind the policies.

### **1.11 Chapter outline**

Chapter 1 provides the background and the context of the research. This chapter specifies the problem statement, the research question and the objectives of the study. It also gives the significance of the study and motivation for undertaking the study. At the same time, a brief discussion of the research approach, methodology, scope and limitation of the study is also provided in this chapter.

Chapter 2 focuses on the analysis of DCE as a concept, in order to establish a theoretical framework for the study. The theoretical framework of the study is drawn from an exploration of the DCE theories of Gutmann and Thompson (2004), Kymlicka and Norman (2000), Callan (1997), Assié-Lumumba (2006) and Gyekye (1997).

Chapter 3 discusses the selected approach and methodology for the study. It justifies the suitability of the selected approach and methodology for the study and stipulates how the analysis technique is applied in collecting and analysing data.

Chapter 4 provides the meaning of policy and education policy, and highlights types of policies. Furthermore, it explores the Namibian education system under German colonial rule, South African colonial rule and post-colonial rule, respectively. Moreover, the chapter analyses some major education policies that support teaching and learning in Namibia, in order to understand how they

contribute to the promotion of DCE in the country. Thereafter, the chapter discusses the implications of DCE for teaching and learning.

Chapter 5 discusses how the Namibian education system employs DCE. The discussion focuses on how the Namibian primary education policies promote equitable access to quality education, social development, and democratic participation, which are the requirements of DCE.

Chapter 6 discusses the meaning of *ubuntu*. At the same time, it outlines the importance of *ubuntu* in African education, and investigates how the Namibian education system integrates the philosophy of *ubuntu*, and finally, discusses the links between *ubuntu* and DCE.

Finally, Chapter 7, summaries the findings of the study, and gives recommendations and a conclusion of the study.

## **Chapter 2: Understanding DCE and establishing the theoretical framework of the study**

### **2.1. Introduction**

The current study analyses meanings of DCE in Namibian primary education through an analysis of education policies that support teaching and learning. I have to establish meanings of DCE before I embark upon the policy analysis. Waghid (2002:1) states, “[o]ne first needs to know meanings, which inform a particular concept, before one can establish an understanding about the effects of such a document”. For me, to get a clear understanding of DCE, I have to analyse the meanings of the words that constitute the concept, namely democracy, citizenship and education. Thereafter, I shall discuss the meanings of deliberative democracy as a concept of DCE from the views of different theorists, who significantly influence my understanding of DCE, such as Gutmann and Thompson (2004), Kymlicka and Norman (2000), Callan (1997), Assié-Lumumba (2006), and Gyekye (1997).

### **2.2 The concept of democracy**

Democracy has had many meanings and connotations in its long history and is understood differently today in the context of different social and economic systems (Arblaster, 1987:1). For that reason, I am going to explore democracy from the views of classical Athens and modern theorists to establish a thorough understanding.

The word “democracy” comes from two Greek words: *demos*, meaning “people”, and *kratos*, meaning “power” (Mathebula, 2013:1). In short, democracy means people’s power. One of the Athenian governors, Pericles (429–450 BC, quoted by Mathebula, 2013:1), describes their constitution as democratic since it puts power into the hands of the majority of the population. In this respect, every individual was expected to be interested in state affairs, not only in his own affairs. However, in classical Athens, democratic participation was restricted only to adult males who had the right to speak in public gatherings and to make decisions. Other people, such as slaves, children, women and foreigners were excluded from participating in the public sphere (Mathebula, 2013:1; Tilly, 2007:26), despite the fact that the slaves made up almost half of the Athenian population.

However, Plato (2008:297) criticised the Athenian democracy, which grants every individual rights and freedoms to participate in polity. Plato’s understanding is that the notion that everyone has equal rights and the capacity to rule, can lead to instability, since it assigns the affairs of the state to the hands of the people who do not have political knowledge and skills. Another critic of the

Athenian democracy is Schumpeter. Schumpeter (1950:261–262) states that the *demos* (ordinary citizens), are politically ignorant, uneducated, unsophisticated and apathetic. As a result, they know nothing about political rule. For Schumpeter, democratic participation for ordinary citizens should be limited to voting for their political leaders.

Where I disagree with Athenian democracy is the exclusion of slaves, women, children and foreigners from participating in public deliberations. The slaves, women, children and foreigners were denied the opportunity to expand their capacity, experience their humanness and exercise tolerance, and were limited to enrich their fellow citizens' knowledge through deliberations. As such, they remained marginalised.

Despite the fact that the Athenian democracy excluded some members of society, its emphasis on equal rights, freedom and active participation is supported by modern theorists of democracy. One such theorist is Budge. Budge (1993:151) defends the Athenian democracy in that its model of democratic participation maintains that there is no insurmountable knowledge barrier between ordinary citizens and the elites, which would prevent the ordinary citizens from full participation. Once they are provided with an opportunity for full participation in deliberation, they will manage to acquire knowledge about politics. Rousseau (1968:64–65) supports Budge, in that through public participation, the person's capacity is developed, his ideas are broadened and his feelings are ennobled. On the same note, Gutmann and Thompson (2004:12) state that democracy in the participatory model, develops individuals and it is capable of transforming dependent individuals into free citizens, and become interested in both private and public goods.

Christiano (2008:2) contends that democracy brings about public equality in collective decision-making. What is required, is for the institutions of society to be structured in such a way that all citizens are treated as equals, which is the core principle of social justice. In fact, any basic institution in a just society is obligated to advance the interest of its people equally, because the basic principles of justice and equality are the moral foundations of democracy and liberal rights (Christiano 2008:12). There is no political society that can justly claim to advance the interests of its citizens equally without giving each citizen an equal opportunity in decision-making, directly or through their representatives (Christiano, 2008:12). In democracy, the liberties of equal citizens and free participation in collective self-rule, are most important (Callan, 1997:5). Democracy emphasises the equal position of all ethnicities, cultures, groups, and individuals, and helps to prevent marginalisation and exclusion (Waghid, 2002:28). Democratic equality allows everyone to see himself or herself not as identical to another, but of equal worth to another person (Waghid, 2002:28).



In the case of Namibia, the democracy of Plato and Schumpeter seems to be prevailing, because inclusion and equality are missing. I agree with Amukugo (2017:35), as she says that democracy in Namibia is an elitist democracy, since only a few groups of educated elites participate in decision-making regarding public issues. She further explains that educated elites are mostly found in urban areas. In that situation, most people in rural areas are excluded from participating in decision-making for public spheres, due to the fact that they are uneducated, and are only included to vote for their political leaders. That exclusion and inequality have roused my curiosity to analyse Namibian education policies, to determine whether they promote DCE at the primary level.

For us to determine whether democracy is prevailing in a certain institution, we have to measure the indicators that are grounded in the concept of democracy, which, according to Mukwambo et al. (2015:188), are universal suffrage, freedom of association, racial and social inclusivity, a society built on freedom, equality and equity, amongst others. Therefore, for me to determine whether Namibian education policies promote DCE in primary education, I shall measure indicators such as access, equity, quality and democracy.

### **2.3 The concept of citizenship**

Originally, citizenship was related to ethnicity in Greek city states. In Athens, one of the well-known city-states in Greece, people who were not brought up in the Hellenic culture, were not granted citizenship status. Surprisingly, native Athenian women and children were not given citizenship rights, and therefore did not have the right to participate in decision-making (Mathebula, 2013:1; Tilly, 2007:26). In Greek democracy, only adult men participated in public matters.

However, during the early nineteenth century, a new concept of citizenship was developed. The idea of nationalism was introduced, so that young people should be educated into a consciousness of nationhood (Heater, 2004:197). In that respect, civic virtues were located at the centre of a classic concept of citizenship, which meant executing one's duties (Heater, 2004:2). Civic virtues include general virtues, social virtues, economic virtues and political virtues, which constitute the current characteristics of citizenship.

Therefore, in the modern world, citizenship can be regarded as a relationship between a state and its citizens. This relationship entails the protection the state gives to its citizens as rights, and the duties that citizens are expected to deliver to the state in return (Lambert & Machon, 2001:4). Kostakopoulou (2008:xii) echoes this notion when he says that citizenship regulates the relationship between the state and the individual, in the sense that the authority of the state is demonstrated in the citizens' duties and responsibilities, whereas civil and political rights determine the freedom of

individuals, and set the limits of the public authority. Furthermore, Kostakopoulou (2008:1) explains that citizenship is an equal membership of citizens to a particular political community in which rights, responsibilities, benefits, equal participation, resources, and a sense of identity, affect all citizens. Moreover, Waghid (2004:31) states that the concept of citizenship is attached to the ideas of liberty and communitarianism. He further explains that a liberal concept of citizenship contends that every individual is entitled to enjoy equal rights, personal security, and freedom of speech, as well as the right to vote. The same individual has an obligation to uphold the rule of law and refrain from any kind of threat that can interfere with others' enjoyment of their rights (Waghid, 2004:31). On the other hand, the communitarian concept of citizenship implies that citizens have to participate actively in deliberation in shaping the society (Waghid, 2004:31).

From Kymlicka and Norman's (2000:30) point of view, a person's citizenship can refer to four distinct ideas.

- An individual's status as a legal citizen. This is clarified by a collection of civil, political and social rights, as well as duties, e.g. to obey the law, pay taxes and perform military service.
- His or her identity as a member of one or more political communities. These identities are based on class, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, profession and sexual preference.
- His or her activities otherwise referred to civic virtues, which include general virtues, social virtues, economic virtues and political virtues. General virtues refer to courage, law-abidingness and loyalty. Social virtues apply to personal independence and open-mindedness. Economic virtues include work ethic, the capacity to delay self-gratification, and adaptability to economic and technological change. Political virtues refer to four essential obligations of the citizens, namely the capacity to discern and respect the rights of others, the willingness to demand only what can be paid for, the ability to evaluate the performance of those in office, and the willingness to engage in public discourse.
- Social cohesion: social stability, political unity and civic peace.

Marshall (1963, cited in Lambert & Machon, 2001:32) highlights the aspects of citizenship as follows:

- civil citizenship emphasises individual freedom of speech, thought and faith, including the right to property, to contract and enjoy justice;
- political citizenship focuses on the rights of participating in political activities; and
- social citizenship, which is the right to security and welfare.

The abovementioned aspects specify the citizenship rights. The exact rights citizens have, will partly determine their citizenship status and identity, as well as the positions of political and social activities available to them (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:31).

However, in Namibia, full citizenship seems to be accorded to the minority, because the disadvantaged people, including the uneducated, the poor and labourers are not availed an opportunity to participate, directly or through their representatives, in decision-making regarding public affairs especially, in policy developments. In most cases, only some groups of educated people and professionals make the decisions. Despite the fact that the disadvantaged people are the majority of the Namibian population, they are not regarded as trustworthy enough to engage in decision-making relating to the development of the country. At the same time, the benefits and resources are not equally distributed, specifically between rural and urban areas. People in urban areas are privileged when compared to those in rural areas in terms of benefits and resources. Even though the disadvantaged people seem to be ignored by the government, they play a determining role regarding the government. They confirm this by saying that, for their loyalty to the state and the ruling party, they tolerate policy formulations that fail to recognise them or promote social and economic inclusion (Arreman, Erixon & Rehn, 2016:254).

## **2.4 The concept of education**

Education can be understood as a process of developing the individual's mind, which involves the acquisition of knowledge and understanding (Hirst & White, 1998:38). Education has the potential to transform the life of a person to become a responsible citizen in society (Winch & Gingell, 1999:71). Education is expected to prepare individuals to understand themselves, their relationships with others and with the whole world, and become conscious of the things that exist in their society (Kinneman, 1932:66, Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:279). At the same time, education is expected to develop the capacities of individuals to be able to engage in public reasoning, as well as how to scrutinise and evaluate how society performs (Amukugo, 2017:13). Education focuses on the development of knowledgeable individuals who are able to think reasonably, contribute to the development of a sustainable community, and the realisation of economic goals that benefit individuals and their communities (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010:71). In multi-ethnic societies, education serves as a medium for unifying members of the society to make them a community. Through education, the individuals learn how to contribute to the cohesiveness and stability of their community (Heater, 2004:2).

On the other hand, Rizvi and Lingard (2010:18) regard education as the producer of needed human resources. It prepares students for occupational opportunities, as well as the job market. An effective education system produces well-qualified individuals and increases their competitiveness for employment opportunities (Mercan & Sezer, 2014:929). In that respect, education therefore can be understood as one of the mediums through which inequalities in society can be redressed (Fataar, 2010:57). Once educational opportunities have provided equally to all, it can decrease the gap between the rich and the poor by producing highly paid workers who can improve their socio-economic situations.

Winch and Gingell (1999:13) highlight six aims of education as follows:

- promoting autonomy of individuals;
- giving the individual a secure cultural background;
- promoting the individuals' capabilities to take part in the development of society through an occupation;
- improving economic development;
- producing good citizens; and
- promoting and protecting society's culture.

In fact, Namibians need education that promotes learners' autonomy and expands their capacity to realise their abundant potential. The education system in Namibia needs to be inclusive by providing quality education to all in order to overcome the ever-increasing socio-economic disparities that harm the country. I am therefore confident, that DCE is an appropriate means of promoting democratic participation, respect for human dignity, and redressing social, political and economic inequalities in Namibia.

## **2.5 Establishing the theoretical framework of the study**

As was discussed earlier in this chapter, the theoretical framework of the study was established from the work of Gutmann and Thompson (2004), Kymlicka and Norman (2000), Callan (1997), Assie-Lumumba (2006), as well as Gyekye (1997). The next section discusses the concept of DCE from Gutmann and Thompson's perspectives.

### **2.5.1 Gutmann and Thompson's concept of DCE**

Gutmann and Thompson (2004), in their book titled *Why deliberative democracy?* refer to the 'deliberative democracy' model as a DCE. According to Gutmann and Thompson (1996:1), deliberative democracy theory provides a basis for democracy that guides moral discussion in political life. One of the most important characteristics of deliberative democracy is a reason-giving

requirement (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:3). Deliberative democracy is a medium for giving reasons that can be accepted by free and equal persons, trying to find fair terms of cooperation in the public sphere (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:24). Gutmann and Thompson (1996:26) further state that deliberative democratic theory concentrates on finding ways of cooperation that each citizen can appreciate, considering that current societies are influenced by conflict and moral disagreement. Finding fair terms of cooperation among free and equal persons is a common good for both individuals and society as a whole, because it prevents conflict and helps them to reach a reasonable conclusion, which is acceptable to all. That is why deliberative democracy has become a more valuable way of dealing with injustice than the usually available alternatives, such as decision-making by political elites or bargaining among interest groups (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:42). On the same note, Gutmann and Thompson (2004:3) differentiate deliberative democracy from any other democracies by basing it on four characteristics, namely: *reason giving*, *binding or accountability*, *dynamic* and *reciprocity*. These characteristics aim at unifying the society and create a platform for an open discussion through which collective agreement is reached for the benefit of the society (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:3).

*Reason giving*, as one of characteristics of deliberative democracy, provides a space for citizens to deliberate on common problems, giving and justifying their reasons for mutual understanding, but expressing the value of mutual respect (Gutmann & Thompson 2004:4). More importantly, reason giving in the deliberative process should be comprehensive and accessible to all citizens whom it is addressing. Everyone should present their ideas in public, not just in the privacy of one's mind, for the public to judge and determine the legitimacy of the ideas (Gutmann & Thompson 2004:4). Through that process, citizens are free to act independently and take part in the governance of their own society, directly or through their representatives (Gutmann & Thompson 2004:3). In addition to that, citizens in a deliberative democracy should not be treated as passive objects to be ruled, but they should be free to present and respond to reason and be able to demand that their representatives give reasons and justify the laws under which they must live together. Reasons are required, both to produce a justifiable decision and to express the value of mutual respect (Gutmann & Thompson 2004:4). Deliberation cannot make unjustifiable reasons justifiable, but it helps participants weigh and recognise the moral merits in their opponents' claims if and when such claims have merits.

Another characteristic is *binding or accountability*. A deliberative democratic process aims at producing decisions that are binding for some period and open for future revision (Guttmann &

Thompson 2004:5). Participants in this process therefore expect their decisions to influence future decisions of the government or any institution (Gutmann & Thompson 2004:5).

According to Gutmann and Thompson (2004), being *dynamic* is one of the characteristics of deliberative democracy. For them, decisions that are made during a deliberative process are kept open for change in the future. This is because reasons could be morally justifiable and respond to a current situation, but they might be less justifiable in the light of future important evidence and circumstances. Keeping decisions open, provides the possibility of a continuing dialogue in which citizens can criticise previous decisions and go ahead in the light of the criticism (Gutmann & Thompson 2004:6). Deliberative democrats consider what happens after a decision is made, as well as what happened before the decision (Gutmann & Thompson 2004:6). In the same vein, Miller (2000:3) argues that a democratic system is deliberative if the decisions it reaches, reflect open discussion among the participants, with people ready to listen to the views and consider the interests of others, and modify their own opinions accordingly. Deliberative democracy therefore demands of citizens to participate in public debate and in making decisions rationally.

*Reciprocity* is one of the characteristics of deliberative democracy. Gutmann and Thompson (2004:141) give the meaning of reciprocity as to make a proportionate return for the good received. Reciprocity entails that citizens owe one another justifications for the mutually binding laws and public policies they collectively enact (Gutmann & Thompson 2004:98). Reciprocity helps citizens seek political (educational) agreement by justifying their reasons to others who share the aim of reaching such an agreement. Moreover, reciprocity calls for establishing social and economic conditions that enable adults to engage with each other as civic equals (Gutmann & Thompson 2004:179). More importantly, reciprocity sets standards to assess whether justifications that decision-makers give, consist of reasons that are *accessible, moral, respectful and revisable* (Gutmann & Thompson 2004:139). It is unfortunate that Namibian citizens are not availed that opportunity to judge the reasons of the decision-makers. For Namibians to exercise their citizenship virtue as law-abiding citizens, they have to accept any decision from decision-makers and put it into practice.

#### *Accessible reasons*

Reasons are accessible if they are comprehensive, mutual and understandable for the people whom the reasons address.

#### *Moral reasons*

Reasons are moral if the forum, in which final decisions are made, includes the voices of the majority and is feasible (Guttmann & Thompson 2004:150). In the case of Namibia, decisions, specifically for education policies formulation, are made by privileged educated people (the minority) and exclude the voices of the ordinary citizens (the majority), such as poor, elderly or disabled people. One cannot sense the morality of their reasons, since the reasons behind their decisions were not brought under public scrutiny.

#### *Respectful reasons*

Respectful reasons concern respecting one another as moral agents. With mutual respect, participants enter the discussion in the political (educational) forum with the purpose of discovering principles on which the society as a whole can act, rather than with the aim of devising arguments by which they can advance only their own interest (Guttmann & Thompson, 2004:80). Participants in a deliberative process recognise the difference between morally respectable differences of opinions, and tolerable ones (Guttmann & Thompson, 2004:151). In Namibia, the decision-making process is quite different. Apart from participating in meetings and workshops, the educated people who make decisions on behalf of their fellow citizens, do not go to the level of deliberation, which they need to accommodate in their decision-making process.

#### *Revisable reasons*

Revisable reasons leave open opportunities to change and to a reversal of decision in the future in light of new information and new development that took place after the decision was made (Guttmann & Thompson, 2004:156). The purpose of reversibility is not only to respect the moral status of the participants in the process, but also to improve the quality of the decisions they make because, it creates space for correcting mistakes made in previous decisions (Guttmann & Thompson 2004:157).

According to Guttmann and Thompson (2004), one of the purposes of deliberative democracy is to promote the legitimacy of collective decisions. In most cases, citizens are faced with scarce or limited resources. Instead of engaging in disagreements and unnecessary misunderstanding resulting from that scarcity, citizens engage in democratic deliberation whereby they justify their reasons in order to help those who do not get what they want, so that they can come to accept the legitimacy of a collective decision (Guttmann & Thompson, 2004:10). More importantly, deliberative democracy prescribes a principle of fair opportunity, which in turn calls for non-discrimination in the distribution of social resources (Guttmann & Thompson, 2004:137).



Another purpose of deliberative democracy is to encourage public-spirited perspective on public issues. Deliberation in a well-organised forum encourages participants to take a broad perspective on questions of common interest and provides an opportunity for advancing both individual and collective understanding (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:11). Deliberative democracy can expand participants' knowledge, including both their self-understanding and their collective understanding of what will best serve their fellow citizens (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:12).

Moral concepts of democracy are also imparted to citizens. These concepts include universal suffrage, free and fair competitive elections, the right to run for public office, freedom of speech, freedom of the press and association, and equal protection under the law, along with other civil, political and socio-economic rights that are necessary conditions for effective political liberty (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:178). This is also reiterated in the Towards Education for All (TEA) policy on primary education in Namibia, as it aims to promote equal access, equity, quality, democracy, justice, democratic participation, respect for human dignity, and lifelong learning (MoBEC, 1993:24). These objectives were aimed at creating equal access to quality education and resources. However, the objectives of TEA are still to be realised as many schools in rural areas still lack adequate teaching and learning resources such as permanent classrooms, textbooks, chairs and desks, libraries, electricity and telecommunication services.

Gutmann and Thompson (2004:35) consider the school as one of the most important sites for deliberation practice. Therefore, the primary aim of the school system in a democratic sphere is to prepare children to become free and equal citizens. This is the nature of DCE that the Namibian primary school learners require. They need a DCE, which prepares them to be free and equal citizens, who are able to take part in the development of the country on an equal basis. Schools should teach future citizens the knowledge and skills needed for democratic deliberation (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:35). Accordingly, learners as future citizens need to acquire skills such as literacy, numeracy and critical thinking for them to be able to participate in deliberations. Gutmann and Thompson (2004:61) emphasise that schools should aim to prepare their learners for democratic deliberations by developing their capacities, so that they will be able to share their ideas with others, and will be able to understand other points of view in order to reach a common justifiable decision. Democracy cannot flourish without well-educated citizens. Thus, schools are the best places to prepare future free and equal citizens to be democratic (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:35). Without a civil society that provides a rehearsal space for political deliberation, citizens are less likely to be politically (or educationally) effective (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:35).



Actually, Gutmann & Thompson's DCE aims at unifying the society and create a platform for an open discussion through which collective agreement is reached for the benefit of the society.

### **2.5.2 Kymlicka and Norman's concept of DCE**

Kymlicka and Norman (2000), in their book titled *Citizenship in diverse societies*, regard deliberative democracy as a concept of DCE. They say that the decisions of a democratic government should be deliberated in public, through open and free discussions. Deliberative democracy requires that the environment of political discussion is one in which participants are equal to one another, and aim at reaching moral agreement on the matters of their shared social and political life (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:127). At the same time, participants in democratic deliberation must justify their understandings of the public's interest or common goods based on moral or ethical reasons, which are reasonable to all participants (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:127). In a deliberative process, no voice should be silenced and everyone's arguments have to be listened to open-mindedly. The decision arrived at through deliberative democracy, has a greater legitimacy than could have been achieved through any other method of decision-making (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:129). For Kymlicka & Norman (2000:127), a greater legitimacy of political actions does not consider whether it favours all citizens' interest equally well, but whether it is established in reasons that all can take as valid. As such, participants in a deliberative process are reminded to listen to others' accounts of the common good and to evaluate them in a spirit of impartiality without considering whether their interest would be served by such a concept (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:140). Democratic deliberation depends on citizens possessing qualities of character that include open-mindedness and willingness to consider reasons that are different from their own.

Participants in deliberative democracy have to ensure, that they strive to maintain peace in the process and pay proper attention to the interests, wishes and opinions of all the citizens in the society (Kymlicka & Norman 2000:156). It is therefore an important responsibility for all the participants in deliberative decision to set up, maintain and operate the legal frameworks that are necessary to ensure peace, resolve conflict, do justice, avoid great harm and provide some basis for improving the conditions of life (Kymlicka & Norman 2000:156). The performance of the society depends not on the justice of its institution or constitution, but also on the virtues, identities and practices of its citizens, including their ability to cooperate, deliberate and feel solidarity with those who belong to different ethnic and religious groups (Kymlicka & Norman 2000:10). If citizens do not possess these qualities, the ability of liberal societies to function successfully and progressively, is reduced. A society could be relatively stable, and yet score poorly in terms of the virtues and practices of democratic citizenship (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:15). In a diverse society, like

Namibia, citizens have to work harder to understand one another and to act together politically, than in a uniform society (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:79).

In their book *Citizenship in diverse societies*, Kymlicka and Norman (2000) pay specific attention to ethno-cultural minorities. They refer ethno-cultural minorities to a wide range of public policies, legal rights and constitutional provisions when the ethnic groups are searching for the recognition of their cultural differences (Kymlicka & Norman 2000:2). They argue for the adoption of minority rights. This is because it helps to remedy the disadvantage that minorities suffer within different institutions, and in doing that, it promotes fairness (Kymlicka & Norman 2000:4). It is important to note that the adoption of minority rights should not be regarded as to initiate unfair privilege or invidious forms of discrimination, but rather compensate for unfair disadvantages experienced. It is also required by justice (Kymlicka & Norman 2000:4). Therefore, it is entirely acceptable to justify a policy that benefits one's own group on grounds of justice, because it helps redress a historical injustice, provided such policy should appeal to every citizen's sense of justice and citizenship solidarity (Kymlicka & Norman 2000:34). It is important to consider, that not only whether particular suggestions for minority rights are consistent with principles of justice, but also whether they would enhance required qualities of democratic citizenship (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:40). Justice towards marginalised groups requires a deliberative process of political decision-making that pays some attention to the marginalised group's needs and identities in discursive exchange (Kymlicka & Norman 2000:125). If people's interests such as recognition, identity, language and cultural membership are not considered by the state, then those people will feel tormented, even if their civil, political and welfare rights are respected (Kymlicka & Norman 2000:4). That feeling of torment can result in serious damage to people's self-respect and sense of agency (Kymlicka & Norman 2000:5).

Moreover, the citizens' sense of justice and commitment to a fair distribution of resources, contributes to the health and stability of democracy in society (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:6). The fair distribution of educational resources in Namibia has been articulated in the TEA policy stated above. The policy asserts the commitment of the Namibia Constitution, article 20 (MoBEC, 1993:3) to a fair distribution of resources when it reiterates "all persons have the right to education. Primary education shall be compulsory and the state shall provide reasonable facilities to render effective this right for every resident within Namibia, by establishing and maintaining State schools at which primary education will be provided free of charge" (MoBEC, 1993:3).

Kymlicka and Norman (2000:26) argue for the importance of expanding educational opportunities for aboriginal people (in this case, learners in rural area schools), not only because they face

discrimination or historical disadvantage, but also because it would make it easier for them to enhance their sense of citizenship within the larger community. The government of a free people is a project that education must carry into the future in those children to acquire the knowledge, capabilities and virtues of citizens who carry the responsibility of collective self-rule (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:54). The intellectual capacities of liberal citizens must be developed and they should be given the necessary information to make informed decisions about government and politics (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:55). Without the development of these capacities, citizens will not be able to watch well over government, and they will not be able to participate intelligently in politics, because these capacities will undoubtedly affect how citizens conceive and pursue their own good in private life as well (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:55). What is needed, is to find ways to strengthen public schools (including schools in rural areas), so that we can come closer to equality of opportunity (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:80). Failing to do that, members of indigenous groups (learners in rural area schools), may feel isolated and distant from a state that does not grant them their dues (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:318). At the same time, they will never feel like full citizens in a state, which does not acknowledge their distinctive rights fully (Kymlicka & Norman 2000:318).

In essence, Kymlicka and Norman's concept of DCE aims to set up spaces for schools, universities, religious sites and clubs, in which people are educated about other shared values, meanings and justice, in order to promote social and political order in society. It also deals with the way people are educated to deliberate, offer their own reasons, listen to others' reasons, recognise and respect other people's civil, political and social rights, as well as question injustice without being ridiculed and rebuked by anyone.

### **2.5.3 Callan's concept of DCE**

Callan's notions of DCE are offered in his work "*Creating citizens: Political education and liberal democracy*", in which he supports a political account of education that teaches learners democratic virtues such as justice, tolerance and mutual respect, so that students can participate fully in dialogue (Callan, 1997:28). According to Callan's notion, DCE entails three aspects. Firstly, teaching learners to speak their minds without fear of being silenced or intimidated. Secondly, encouraging learners to participate in a distress-provoking dialogue regarding the topic of conversation, and lastly, initiating learners to a sense of justice according to which they accept the responsibility for the rights of others, what it is to care about others as partners, and to restrain themselves from violating others' rights (Callan 1997:76, 79). He emphasises that to believe in liberal democracy, is to believe in free and equal citizenship (Callan, 1997:7). The implication of

Callan's notion of DCE is that educators and learners must engage in dialogues in which they function as civic equals on the basis that their deliberation will receive due recognition by the other, even when they disagree. Furthermore, Callan's DCE implies that learners must be attentive to social injustices such as the marginalisation and exclusion of the weaker other, and that students engage in communicative action with the aim of solving particular problems and reaching out to what is still to come. This is only possible if the education system in Namibia allows free and equal citizenship, which, according to Callan, is about the kind of people they became and the kind of people they encourage their children to become (Callan, 1997:2). For Callan (1997:9), the virtue of justice is necessary as an expression of the interpersonal recognition that benefits moral relations among equals, even when caring attachment is enough to motivate action that defuses conflicts and gives everyone the liberty and other resources to which they have a right (Callan, 1997:81). Good citizens have the virtue of justice (Callan, 1997:43).

Once children learn to import justice into situations where a higher form of caring is psychologically feasible, they will give up the best feasible moral response in favour of one that is inferior (Callan, 1997:79). The ties of friendship and trust intensify the moral feelings that attend the virtue of justice, and enlarge the obligation we owe to others (Callan, 1997:93). The purpose of moral education is to develop virtues that make one both a caring person, as well as someone who is ready, appropriately to receive the care of others (Callan, 1997:203). Reciprocity requires citizens to propose fair terms of cooperation to others, to settle differences in mutually acceptable ways and to abide by agreed terms of cooperation, so long as others are prepared to do likewise (Callan, 1997:175). Therefore, it is imperative that education must be wide in scope, transforming the selves of future citizens in ways that push beyond the sphere of political obligation, as they learn to live according to the prescribed comprehensive values, and this requires pedagogy pitted against all sources of diversity at odds with those values (Callan, 1997:16). In the same vein, education should prepare children to be fully cooperating members of society and enable them to be self-supporting, and encourage the political virtues, so that they will want to honour the fair terms of cooperation with the rest of society, according to Rawls (1993, cited in Callan, 1997:39). This means that future citizens of a democratic community have to be assimilated into a common political culture that affirms shared understandings of law and government (Callan, 1997:172). In addition to that, future citizens of a democratic community need to be literate, capable of self-reliance and show initiative (Callan, 1997:173). Therefore, children need to be equipped with the capabilities to live more than the one way of life, which their parents would prescribe. Otherwise, children will lack a meaningful right to exist, should the prescribed path turn out to be unfulfilling (Callan, 1997:189). For that

reason, policymakers' efforts might be better directed towards the improvement of common schools (such as schools in rural areas in Namibia), rather than to the strengthening of alternatives (school in urban areas) in order to avoid injustice, as some children and their parents (in rural areas) will be left without access to good schools (Callan, 1997:186).

#### **2.5.4 Africans' concept of DCE**

In the previous section, I articulated the concept of DCE from the Western theorists' perceptions. I contend that it is not good enough to interrogate only the Western concepts of DCE and leave out the ideas of African philosophers. My attention was captured by ideas from African theorists regarding DCE, such as Assié-Lumumba (2006) and Gyekye (1997).

In her book, *Higher education in Africa: Crises, reforms and transformation*, Assié-Lumumba (2006) orients us to the history of education on the African continent. She believes that the historical perspectives will provide a refined literacy about the process of the journey of African higher education, which can lead to a critical rethinking of chances for developing and carrying out planned changes in the higher education system (2006:15). She sees history as a clock that people use to tell the political and cultural time of the day (2006:24). To bring about change, one should know what was done in the past, how it was done, what the outcome was and how it is today, to determine future actions for improvement.

Assié-Lumumba (2006) expresses great concern about the African education system, which is influenced by the Western cultures that colonised the African continent in the past. For her, education in Africa needs to be guided by an African socio-historical context, in which culture plays a vital role. Assié-Lumumba believes that education in Africa, in its different disciplinary forms, such as Philosophy, Science, Technology and knowledge-based, must be re-attached to African culture. Gyekye (1997:35) shares the same sentiments as he avers that African cultural traditions should be the basis of development in the modern Africa. Moreover, Assié-Lumumba argues that the African philosophy of *ubuntu* should be the foundation of African education. *Ubuntu* philosophy is defined by its humanistic nature, which can help in shaping African education for promoting the well-being of all African people (Assié-Lumumba, 2006:13). In African traditions, it is necessary for the individual to relate to and depend on others, while enjoying personal freedom, considering culture and emphasising the balance between culture and nature (Assié-Lumumba, 2006:130). This connection is important in African culture and practical life, simply because it allows people to experience their cultural expression and the use of their culture together. In addition, the people's connections help the individual human being to develop and

achieve the fullness of his or her own potential, which cannot be achieved without relationships with other individuals (Gyekye, 1997:39). It is a strong and dominant belief in African cultural tradition that an individual cannot live and progress in life without contributions of other people or the community. For the same reason, the Akan people of Ghana (a tribe in Ghana) have proverbs that state: “[a] person is not a palm tree, that he/she should be complete or self-sufficient” (Gyekye, 1997:37), and “Wisdom is not in the head of one person” (Gyekye, 1997:31). These proverbs indicate that nobody, as an isolated individual, can flourish, but his or her success in life, or the realisation of his or her potential, depends on the activities, practices and values of the community. At the same time, every individual, regardless of ethnic group, gender or age is expected to help in shaping the culture, social and political forms of his or her society and its institutions (Gyekye, 1997:56).

It is expected that African learners (in this case, Namibian learners) need to work together with others autonomously and appreciate their values and traditions. At the same time, they experience their differences and respect their individualities, and move forward for the well-being of everyone. African learners (Namibian learners in particular) should be aware that in African cultural tradition, people live and work in relationships with others, and they demonstrate moral sensitivity by expressing African traditional values (*ubuntu* values) such as kindness, generosity, compassion, peace, harmony, solidarity, mutual reciprocities, freedom, dignity, respect, security, sympathy, social justice and concern for others. It is for this reason that Gyekye (1997:259) makes a statement: “The enjoyment of a human-being which is involved in the meaning of humanism- is an outstanding feature of the African culture”. To enjoy a human being simply means to recognise and appreciate an individual as a human being, by respecting his or her values as equal to our own, without interfering with his or her basic rights, which intrinsically belong to an individual by virtue of being human (Gyekye, 1997:259). This implies that every member of a society is expected to show concern for the well-being of others and expect them to participate fully in the development of the society. It should be noted that the needs of African societies and people could only be successfully addressed if African education is designed from collective African decisions, based on knowledge of Africa, as the basis for informed policymaking (Assié-Lumumba, 2006:136).

Assié-Lumumba (2006:131) relates DCE and collective well-being to the notion of the public good. She looks at the public good from three perspectives.

- Publicness in consumption. This perspective concerns whether the service was received by all the people. Assie-Lumumba`s democratic education emphasises equality.



- Publicness in net benefits. This perspective deals with the question whether the service was distributed equitably in the society. For her, fairness is also an important element.
- Publicness in decision-making. This perspective questions the origin of the decision to place the service in the society. The concern is whether the decision was made during public deliberation as a requirement for democratic society. In a democratic society, the people who are affected by that decision should make the decision in public.

In brief, Assié-Lumumba's perspective of DCE considers public deliberation, and equal and equitable distribution of services. For her, public good commands for each individual to have a place in society as a basis of belonging that creates self-esteem and self-support. On the other hand, Gyekye (1997:46) regards common goods as basic goods to which every individual should have access and which influence the creation of a moral, social and political system for intensifying the well-being of the citizens in a community.

Concerning inequalities in Africa, Assié-Lumumba (2006:143) believes that inequality needs to be systematically addressed. She singles out the inequality of service delivery between schools in urban and rural areas. She explains that in Africa, schools in urban areas are more privileged than schools in rural areas. Urban schools have access to telecommunications system centres and other facilities that are not available in rural schools. That is the situation in Namibia. Schools in urban areas have teaching and learning materials such as ICT equipment that is not found in rural areas schools (Katjavivi, 2016). That access has implications for teaching and learning, as well as for socialisation between citizens in rural and urban areas.

These citizens (rural and urban people) are hardly living peacefully together if they have reason to believe that they are not given equal economic treatment (Gyekye, 1997:91). Economic inequalities result in undermining individuals' freedom, which is an important element of democracy, and consequently, make it difficult for these people to exercise their political rights (Gyekye, 1997:142). Since political equality is a goal of democracy, that goal cannot be achieved in the face of economic and social inequalities. Those differences disconnect the citizens and create a sense of segregation, which is contrary to the African philosophy of *ubuntu*, and it is not supporting democratic education. The limited resources and their impact on teaching and learning conditions, contribute to lowering the level of staff and learners' motivation in rural areas. For that reason, the quality of education in rural schools is poor compared to that in urban schools. That deference in the quality of education contributes to the increase of inequality in terms of economic, social and political situations in the country.

This inequality needs to be addressed urgently, because it will influence Namibian learners negatively. Learners, who experience an education system that is characterised by unacceptable tenets such as unequal treatment, are likely to accept those tenets as part of their culture. This is because education depends on the process of producing culture and in shaping people's understanding, acceptance and critical assessment of this culture (Assié-Lumumba, 2006:55). It is for this reason that Assié-Lumumba (2006:114) urges African countries to develop an education system that can provide a plausible education and educated people who can become competent in the production of knowledge, which can be relevant to addressing African challenges and promote societal development. Africa needs to increase the capacity of the population, women and men, to have access to knowledge, even in the absence of employment. It is high time for Africa to produce educated people, who are able to analyse and understand the structural matters that confront Africa and its people (Assié-Lumumba 2006:124). Educated people are likely to be active participants in the decision-making process, even if they are unemployed, and ask the right questions that contribute to finding solutions (Assie-Lumumba 2006:131).

Generally, in the traditional African political practice, the king's councils and other assemblies provide the forum for the free expression of opinion on public matters (Gyekye, 1997:118). One example is the traditional Akan political structure, which allows anyone to participate in decision-making. Even ordinary youths are empowered to give opinions and suggestions that have equal chances with those of elders to be considered. The traditional African democracy is also proved by the statement of Julius Nyerere (the former president of Tanzania) as he says, "[t]he elders sit under the big tree and talk until they agree" (1966, quoted by Nyirabu, 2002:100). This implies that they deliberate in public forums until they reach a consensus. Gyekye (1997:130) supports this deliberation process, as he says that in all kinds of deliberations, the aim should be the achievement of consensus with justifications that are considered valid for the practice of democracy in most traditional African political systems. In most cases, consensus may not result in agreement but may leave every participant in the forum satisfied, without feeling left out (Gyekye 1997:130). Most importantly, all people should have an equal opportunity to speak their minds, promote patience and mutual tolerance, and appreciate the need to abandon or modify their own position in the face of more persuasive arguments by the others (Gyekye, 1997:130). Such equal opportunity should not be considered only in deliberation or any decision-making process, but it has to be taken into account even in service delivery and recognitions, such as in the allocation of awards, public offices and educational facilities. At the same time, equal opportunity allows room for social mobility. One



of the most important benefits of social mobility is that people feel bound to one another by social and professional interests (Gyekye 1997:90).

Gyekye and Assié-Lumumba's DCE requires all citizens to have equal opportunity in decision making and access to social resources such as health facilities, education, security, work and income. They also iterate for education in Africa to be reconnected to Africa's culture for social cohesion and political stability.

## **2.6 Summary of the chapter**

All these theorists argue that DCE emphasises deliberative democracy in which citizens (learners and teachers) have equal opportunities to express their opinions and justify their reasons. Reasons have to be comprehensive and acceptable to all participants. At the same time, participants should appreciate ideas from others that are different from theirs, and must be willing to change their positions regarding the validity of reasons, in order to promote patience, mutual tolerance and respect. In a deliberative democracy, no one should be silenced or treated as passive, but an active participant with full rights in decision-making and free to ask justifications from other participants or from representatives.

Democratic deliberation is guided by principles like publicity, accountability, basic liberty, and basic and fair opportunity. Fair opportunity is an important principle in DCE, because it helps to remedy the disadvantage that minorities suffer within different institutions, specifically in the distribution of social resources. If the government does not attend to some citizens' interests, those citizens feel rejected, which in turn, demoralise their sense of citizenship and negatively affect their political, economic and social performance. This therefore calls for DCE to be regarded as an appropriate means of dealing with inequality in society.

DCE in Africa in general, and in Namibia in particular, should aim to promote the well-being of all African people, which is one of the principles of African culture. In African culture, people live and work in relationships with others, and they demonstrate moral sensitivity by expressing African traditional values (*ubuntu* values) such as kindness, generosity, compassion, peace, harmony, solidarity, mutual reciprocities, freedom, dignity, respect, security, sympathy, social justice, stability, satisfaction and concern for others. As such, schools in Namibia should train learners for deliberative democracy as a principle of DCE. Learners need to be prepared to become free and equal citizens in decision-making that concern their lives and should be able to state their arguments, and justify their reasons to others. Learners should learn to listen to those who have

different opinions. As far as DCE is concerned, Namibian learners need to be introduced to African traditional values of *ubuntu* at an early stage of schooling.

## **Chapter 3: Research approach and methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The research approach to this study is the philosophy of education. Like other research approaches, a philosophy of education approach comprises two components: methodology, method. This study will apply interpretive theory as methodology and conceptual analysis, deconstructive analysis, document analysis as methods.

Firstly, in this chapter, I will outline the reasons for calling this study a philosophical inquiry, and why I designed it according to the principles and elements of a philosophy of education approach. Secondly, I will justify the rationale behind the selection of interpretive theory as the methodology for this study. Lastly, the discussion will focus on the methods that will be used for data collection, which are conceptual analysis, deconstructive analysis and document analysis.

### **3.2 Research approach**

This study is a philosophical inquiry. It is a philosophical inquiry in the sense that it concentrates on clarification, and seeks to gain a deep understanding of concepts regarding educational practices. Heyting, Lenzen and White (2001:19) state that analytical philosophers of education are interested in conceptual clarification and in the disclosure of unclear theories. This is done not for their own sake, but because of the understanding emphasis on educational policies and practices, in order to bring about improvement. As such, philosophy of education is applied in this study to allow for the clarification of the concept of DCE and establish an in-depth knowledge of the concept. Therefore, philosophy of education will help to shed light on the meaning of DCE in the Namibian context, and determine whether there is an anticipation of creating a democratic society.

Moreover, philosophy of education helps anyone to tackle the question that sets the inquiry, by questioning the nature of conceptual analysis itself, and how to scrutinise the ground of knowledge (Hirst & White, 1998:29). In that respect, the philosophers of education address questions regarding education policy, human development, and curriculum theory (Jacobs, 2012:9). In this study, philosophical principles will guide me to address the question of the Namibian primary education policies, to determine whether these policies contribute to the cultivation of DCE at primary education level.

Hirst and White (1998:6) specify four areas in education on which philosophy of education basically focuses. They are as follows.

- The analysis of concepts. In this area, the interest of the philosophy of education is on the analysis of concepts that are specific to education. This area is regarded as falling within the ambit of philosophical psychology and social philosophy.
- The application of ethics and social philosophy. This area focuses on the exploration of the assumptions about the desired content and procedures of education.
- The area that focuses on the examination of conceptual schemes and assumptions used by educational psychologists about educational processes.
- The area that concentrates on the philosophical character of the content and organisation of the curriculum, and questions about learning.

In short, the philosophy of education aims at an analysis of educational concepts, exploration of the content and procedures of education, examination of conceptual schemes embedded in the language used about educational processes, and the scrutiny of the content and structure of the curriculum, including that of learning-related matters. Hence, the philosophy of education is a suitable approach to this study, since it focuses on an analysis of the concept of DCE, and seeks to identify the implications of DCE for teaching and learning at primary school level in Namibia. Moreover, philosophical principles have provided a space to explore and analyse literatures (theories) on DCE for a deep understanding of the concept.

From Soltis's (1988:196-197) point of view, the philosophy of education has three dimensions, namely, the personal, the public and the professional.

- The personal dimension concerns a set of personal beliefs about what is good, right and valuable in education. Everyone has personal perspectives about education, expectations of education, and the overall contributions education can make to society.
- The public dimension focuses on the guidance and directions of human practices. Being philosophical about education in the public dimension is to clarify public ambitions and educational values, give sense and purpose to the cooperative public enterprise of education, and provide the opportunity for contemplative participation in educational discourse by all who are concerned about it.
- The professional dimension provides specific procedures and directions concerning education practices. The point of being a professional philosopher is to make the educational discourse as rationally self-reflective as possible, by providing philosophically meticulous scrutiny, criticisms, justifications, analyses and syntheses of features of educators' conceptual and normative domains.

This study was conducted from professional dimension perspectives. Philosophical principles guided this study to identify the tenets of unequal access to quality education in the Namibian education policies. The principles also facilitated the judgement of the justifications provided in policy texts, based on DCE theories. This was done for the sake of bringing about an improvement in the Namibian education policies for the promotion of DCE.

### **3.3 Research methodology**

Methodology is the overall framework of the research. It explains why the researcher has selected a specific method to be used in collecting data. Leedy and Ormrod (2010:12) refer to methodology as the popular approach the researcher utilises in doing the research, which stipulates specific techniques the researcher chooses. Mouton (1996:35) takes methodology as a number of steps that scientists use in reaching their goals of valid knowledge, while Hopkins and Antes (1990:106) explain methodology as a basic framework for a research project, which outlines the structure of a specific procedure about how the data will be collected and analysed. I understand methodology as all forms of action to be taken in carrying out research in order to acquire new knowledge through a specific study. Some researchers relate methodology to a paradigm. Waghid (2002:42) describes paradigms as theories of knowledge, which provide a rationale for education research. Paradigms guide a researcher to collect data in a systematic way and interpret that data meaningfully to develop new knowledge. Some examples of paradigms are positivism, phenomenology, pragmatism, interpretive inquiry and critical inquiry. In this study, I applied interpretive theory.

#### **3.3.1 Interpretive theory**

An interpretive theory was used as a primary methodology guiding this study, in order to help in gaining an understanding and getting a meaning of DCE in Namibian primary school policies. Newton (1986:3) specifies the task of interpretation as conveying the meaning of the literary text. With an interpretive paradigm, the researcher has to involve him- or herself in the process of negotiating meaning, by applying his or her own social competencies in order to understand the participant's situation, since interpretive theory puts emphasis on the process of understanding (Le Grange, 2015:60). I analysed the concept and interpreted the meaning of the concept of DCE by looking at the liberal understanding of the concept. For Tshabangu (2015:40), interpretive researchers seek to understand the participants they are studying, through the meaning that people connect to their social worlds. He (Tshabangu, 2015:50) further emphasises that words and actions of participants establish meanings, which lead to a deep understanding of the world in which they live. Nevertheless, words and actions alone do not lead to a deep understanding of events.

Interpretive theory emphasises analysis and interpretation of words and actions for a deep understanding of events.

Fay (1975:79) states that interpretive methodology attempts to give an understanding and meaning to a set of rules and procedures of a given action and how that action contributes to a human life through which the main idea and intentions of the actors are reflected. The Namibian education policies are human products, influenced by the historical background of education in the country. The policies specify the purpose, values and structure of the education system and outline ways in which education contributes to society. The close study of education policies revealed the historical background of the Namibian education system. This contributed to an understanding of the Namibian education system. With that understanding, I was able to determine whether there are significant governmental attempts to promote DCE equitably in the country. At the same time, the education policies indicated how the education system in Namibia contributes to the welfare of the citizens, in terms of social and economic equality.

Le Grange (2015:62) observes that interpretive research is founded on the belief that there are multiple realities or truths, which need multiple methods for understanding them. This is because reality is personally constructed, from one's own perspectives about the social world. Since different people have different perspectives and contexts, there are many meanings in the world and there is no one meaning that is more valid or true than others. As such, the meaning of DCE in the Namibian context may mean different things to different people, but all meanings may be considered as valid. The validity of the findings in interpretive research, as Le Grange (2015:63) explains, depends upon the quality of the environment, and the linguistic and cognitive skills of the researcher in the production of data analyses and conclusion.

According to Waghid (2002:46), an interpretive inquiry emphasises phenomenological and hermeneutical inquiries. A phenomenological inquiry deals with interpreting human experience, perceptions, attitudes and behaviours. Waghid (2004:6) confirms this by saying that a phenomenological inquiry is the philosophy of human consciousness regarding the way in which people connect meaning to the world. Tshabangu (2015:45) refers to a phenomenological inquiry as the study of consciousness as experienced by individuals related to their own perspective. Since, in this study, I did not focus on human consciousness, phenomenological inquiry was not appropriate. Instead, I applied a hermeneutical inquiry, which deals with interpreting texts, since my focus was on education policies and literatures as texts.

The term “*hermeneutics*” comes from the Greek verb *herméneuein* (Higgs, 1995:223; Palmer, 1969:13), which means to interpret. From Le Grange’s (2015: 59) experience, hermeneutics started as the interpretation of Bible texts, and then later it became to be applied to human actions, particularly in German sociology. Tshabangu (2015:43) observes that hermeneutics has become a favoured science of interpretation of written texts, not only in the theological field, but also in art, literature, music and philosophy. He further explains that it involves the interpretation of all forms of communication, such as written texts as well as verbal and non-verbal forms of communication (Tshabangu, 2015:47). Hermeneutics is associated with historical and literal texts (Higgs, 1995:12). Hermeneutics is a method that is used to interpret and establish an understanding of the movement of history in relation to texts (Gadamer, 1989, cited in Waghid, 2004:8). In order to understand a concept, one has to study the history of the concept, such as its development and how it came into use. History helps to bring an understanding of a present situation. Hence, hermeneutics guided me to study the historical background of the Namibian education system. It was crucial for me to understand the history of the Namibian education system, which informs and influences the meaning of DCE in the current Namibian primary school policies. The Namibian education system has to be understood and interpreted within the context of the country. For this study, hermeneutics is therefore the suitable inquiry to use in order to understand and interpret those policies, specifically how they guide teaching and learning at primary school level.

The seeking of understanding, explanations and searching for meanings has led this study to fall under an interpretive theory.

### **3.4 Research method**

Research methods are the specific formulas selected to be used in collecting data. Dawson (2009:27) refers to method as the techniques to be used in collecting data. She further provides examples of methods such as interviews, focus groups, questionnaires and participant observation. Brynard et al. (2014:40) provide similar examples, and for them, the most commonly used techniques of data collection are an exploration of relevant literatures, interviews, questions and observations. Cohen et al. (2011:128) share different examples of methods, such as simulations, role play, tests, personal constructs, biographies and case studies. Cohen et al. (2011) also include interviews, questionnaires and observation as methods. In this study, I used deconstructive analysis, conceptual analysis and document analysis as my methods to collect data.

### 3.4.1 Conceptual analysis

It is crucial to give the meaning of the word “concept” before moving on to conceptual analysis. Mukwambo et al. (2015:186) refer the word concept to a mental representation that summarises a set of similar observations, feelings, ideas, perceptions, understandings and so forth. In other words, a concept is a complex summary of a whole set of outlooks, behaviours, attitudes and features which are seen as having some parts in common. An example of this is the word “education” as a concept. One needs to specify which education is referred to, and whether it is formal or informal education. Even though formal and informal educations differ in structure and approach, they share the same reason of their existence, that is, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, which lead them (formal and informal education) to be conceptualised as education. The term ‘concept’, as Mukwambo et al. (2015:188) explain it, is created by people in the form of a word or a phrase for the purpose of communication, in an attempt to describe things that they think have important characteristics in common. As such, the focused concept in this study is ‘DCE’. With this understanding of the meaning of the word concept, a conceptual analysis is the next step.

Conceptual analysis is a philosophical technique used to clarify the meanings of concepts. According to Mouton (1996:116), conceptual analysis focuses on the specification of the meaning of the concept by using other concepts that are more familiar. Hirst and White (1998:30) state that by analysing a concept, we try to make an explicit explanation of the concept in the weak sense. Hirst and White (1998:33) further give the reason for conceptual analysis as to see through the words, and get a clear understanding of the similarities and differences that might be picked out. Analysis is required in answering some other philosophical questions that are more complex and complicated to tackle (Hirst & White, 1998:34). For instance, this study sought to identify the implications of DCE for teaching and learning, which is a complex and complicated question to approach. To approach this question from philosophical perspectives, first I had to search for the understanding (meaning) of the concept DCE in order to identify its implications. Without the meaning of the concept, its effects could not be identified. This means one needs to clarify the meaning of the concept before assessing its contributions. Since people attach more than one meaning to a concept, it is important to specify exactly which meaning we use in context, in order to understand what we are talking about (Mukwambo et al., 2015:189). To analyse a concept is to examine the use of the word in order to find out the principles that govern its use (Hirst & White, 1998:30). In other words, to analyse a concept, is to search and dig for a deep understanding of the meaning of the concept in order to establish clarity as to how its practices are organised.



At an early stage, it is important to familiarise oneself with the most important theories that relate to the research problem, in order to establish the meaning of the concepts in the problem statement (Mouton, 1996:114). For a deep understanding of the concept, I have explored the theories of different prominent theorists regarding DCE, such as Gutmann and Thompson (2004), Kymlicka and Norman (2000), Callan (1997), Assie-Lumumba (2006) as well as Gyekye (1997). The theoretical understanding of the concept of DCE guided me as a framework to analyse the Namibian education policies. In the analysis process, I sought to determine how experts in the field use the concept of DCE (Kahn & Zeidler, 2017:540) for a better understanding. In attempting to analyse a concept, we have to study carefully and consider its relationship to other concepts and their use in different types of sentences (Hirst & White, 1998:33). An understanding of how a concept is used in sentence, does not come from the study of grammar alone, it is also important to understand the different types of purposes that lie behind the use of sentences (Hirst & White, 1998:33). The uses of a concept in sentences also need to be understood in terms of other non-linguistic purposes that people have in their social lives.

### **3.4.2 Deconstructive analysis**

I applied deconstructive analysis as a method in order to question the meaning of DCE, which seems to be absent from the Namibian primary school policies. Derrida (1977, cited in Waghid, 2002:56) believes that deconstructive inquiry helps us to ask questions about what we have not thought of, about what is heavily invested in our practices and about what has not been said or heard in our liberatory efforts. In this case, deconstructive analysis was used to study the Namibian education policies in order to determine how the previously marginalised people (people in rural areas) in Namibia are redressed in terms of the social injustice and educational inequality of the past.

Deconstructive analysis can challenge prevailing views of education policies that perpetuate exclusion, sexism and racism, and fail to recognise leadership in women, minorities and people in lower positions, such as marginalised people (Waghid, 2002:56). Boje (2001:2) supports this, as he says that by applying deconstructive analysis, the researcher identifies the instability, complex movements, processes of change, and the practice of differences and heterogeneity that cause stability, unity structure, function and coherence to be experienced only on one side, not to the other. As such, deconstructive analysis will challenge the views of education policies that seem pay no attention to the exclusion of learners in rural area schools from participating in quality education. The inequality in access to teaching and learning resources seems to be absent from the Namibian

primary education policies. Hence, deconstructive analysis helped me to discover and identify what has been muted, which I voiced and broke the silence, so that DCE can be fully implemented at the Namibian primary education level. Waghid (2002:56) takes the aim of deconstructive inquiry as to deconstruct (undo, dismantle and overturn) meaning in language and knowledge systems through textual analysis. Le Grange (2015:20) believes that, from deconstructive analysis perspectives, reality is not found somewhere else; it is constituted in and through language. Le Grange (2015:22) further explains that, deconstructive analysis focuses on the concept of the text, which could be a piece of writing, an oral exchange, a theatre event, a work of art or presentation of self. For Derrida (1978:x), meaning is always absent even in the words we use, thus, there is a need for searching for the meaning of what has not been revealed or what has been hidden. Therefore, deconstructive analysis is used to search for meanings beyond the text or meanings, which are not conventionally considered (Derrida, 1978 cited in Waghid, 2004:14).

Shanyanana (2011:13) argues that the meaning of DCE in Namibia, as a means of transformation and emancipation of the oppressed, need to be criticised continually in order to establish a new meaning. Therefore, deconstructive method guided this study to discover the new meaning of DCE, which will accelerate the redress of unequal allocations of resources and social disadvantages in the country. In other words, I searched for the meaning of DCE in the Namibian education policies, which I assumed to be excluded.

### **3.4.3 Document analysis**

Since documents were the main source of information in this study, content analysis was used as a technique. Content analysis helps a researcher to see and reveal the meanings within the communication source (Neuman, 2011:362). In this study, content analysis enabled me to establish the meaning of DCE within the Namibia primary school policies. Documents (education policies) reveal historical background and traditions, which leads to a deep understanding.

Wagner et al. (2012:148) refer to documentary analysis as a coherent and theoretical method, which employs procedures and techniques for discovering, revealing, determining and analysing documents for their applicability, value and meaning. They further explain the word 'document' as a term used in research to include any kind of text, be it paintings, historical writing, governmental records, mass media, novels, plays and drawings. Ayoola (2017:43) understands that documental analysis requires data to be analysed and interpreted in order to obtain meaning, establish an understanding and construct empirical knowledge. According to McCulloch (2004:7), documents are the most important means of communication through which we can get an understanding of

how society has developed, and how it is progressing as it does so. I therefore analysed the education policies for teaching and learning, through which I understood how DCE is being implemented in Namibian primary schools. These policies provided me with a history of DCE in the Namibian education system, which enhanced the understanding of DCE in Namibia today. The policies I analysed were TEA, ETSIP, ICT, and Strategic Plan 12–17.

### **3.5 Summary of the chapter**

This chapter focused on the research approach and methodology. The approach of this study is philosophy of education. I have designed this study with the philosophy of education approach for the reason that it concentrates on the clarification of an educational concept and seeks for deep understanding of educational matters. This chapter also discussed interpretive theory as methodolog and conceptual analysis, deconstructive analysis and document analysis as methods. I was interested in establishing a deep understanding of the concept of DCE, clarification and interpretation of its meaning in the Namibian context. Interpretation theory was the appropriate methodology to use. At the same time, deconstruction analysis questioned the meaning of DCE, which seemed to be missing in the Namibian primary education policies. Document analysis was used as method, since education policies were the source of information. The next chapter focuses on the analysis of education policies. It will stipulate clearly whether these policies promote DCE in the country.

## **Chapter 4: The Namibian education system: a search for DCE**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter explores the extent to which DCE is currently implemented in Namibian primary education and identifies challenges that delays the promotion of DCE in the country. This was done through the analysis of policies that support teaching and learning to determine whether they contribute to the cultivation of DCE. The analysis was guided by interpretive theory as methodology, and conceptual analysis, deconstructive analysis and document analysis as methods. This methodology helped me to gaining an understanding and getting a meaning of DCE in DCE theories and in Namibian primary school policies.

However, before the analysis of policies, it was important first to discuss the meanings of policy and education policy, as well as highlighting the types of policies. The types of policies on which I focused, include public policies, distribution policies and redistribution policies. Thereafter, the chapter will explore the historical background of the Namibian education system regarding three significant periods of its development, namely, education under German colonial rule, South African colonial rule and post-colonial rule. The history of the Namibian education established an understanding of how the Namibian education system has been developing and how it influences current education policies. At the same time, it leads to the understanding of the reason that the government had to reform the education system from an authoritarian elite education system, to democratic education for all. After exploring the history of education in Namibia, policies such as Toward Education for All (MoBEC, 1993), Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (GRN, 2007), ICT policy for education (MoE, 2005), and Strategic Plan 2012–2017 (MoE, 2012), will be analysed. These policies were analysed by employing indicators such as access, equity, quality and democracy as measurements for DCE. Finally the chapter discusses the implications of DCE for teaching and learning.

### **4.2 The meaning of policy and education policy**

For an organisation to meet its goals and objectives, it formulates policies that regulate its operations. Policies clearly define the purpose, values and characteristics of the organisation, and outline ways in which the organisation contributes to society. Policies are designed to control actions and behaviours, and to lead institutions and officials in a specific direction (Rizvi & Langard, 2010:8). Furthermore, policies involve the allocation of different types of resources, such as human, economic and ideological (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010:7).

However, education policy is a document with detailed procedures and actions related to education issues, which are followed in order to bring about desired goals (Trowler, 1998:48). McLaughlin (2000:442) refers to education policy as a detailed prescription for action aimed at the maintenance or improvement of educational institutions or practices. Moreover, education policies can also be understood as a set of decisions, which have been taken by politicians who exercise power through specified actions, intended to change institutions or practice (Waghid, 2002:1). This means that education policies are developed by politicians who are in power and those responsible for governing the country. In that regard, superiors make decisions and impose them on ordinary citizens for implementation, which is a kind of authoritarian system. However, in a democratic country, ordinary citizens have to be given an opportunity to participate and influence policy decisions that affect their lives (Amukugo, 2017:10). Therefore, Waghid (2002:2) takes education policy as a document that is developed by people based on their experiences, purposes and needs, with the intention of bringing about change. From McLaughlin's (2000:442) point of view, educational policies stem at different levels and contexts in the educational system and from a number of different institutions and offices ranging from national to school level. However, educational policies vary with respect to the scope of their contents and applications (McLaughlin, 2000:442). There are specific education policies and general education policies. Specific education policies are policies that relate to strategies for the teaching of particular topics within specific subjects, while general policies are those focusing on matters such as the aims of education and the structure of the educational system (McLaughlin, 2000:442). However, educational policies are aimed at the resolution of practical issues and problems (McLaughlin, 2000:450). As such, the Namibia Government identified a need for transforming the education system from an authoritarian education system to a DCE system, and developed policies to facilitate the implementation. The DCE system introduced education for all, which is a right of every Namibian, instead of being a privilege for the minority, as it was during the authoritarian system. The next section discusses types of policies.

### **4.3 Types of policies**

This section discusses policies like public policy, distribution policy and redistribution policy.

#### **4.3.1 Public policy**

Public policy articulates the meanings of values and specifies the importance of those values. In the case of education, public policy focuses on education values such as equality, excellence, autonomy, accountability and efficiency (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010:72). Therefore, it is important for policymakers to assemble, organise and order these values in such a way that they are consistent.

This requires prioritising some values ahead of others and re-articulating their meanings. For example, in recent years, education values were not committed to a concern for social equality, therefore, it is required that the meaning of equality must be re-articulated (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010:72). Similarly, a commitment to system accountability may sometime conflict with the value of autonomy, requiring autonomy to be redefined so that this conceptual conflict does not result in the loss of policy legitimacy (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010:72). The analysed policies in this study (TEA, ETSIP, ICT, and Strategic Plan 12–17) fall under public policy category. As such, access, equity, quality and democracy as educational values, need to be articulated in Namibian education policies in such a way that they carry more weight, so that DCE can be realised at primary education level countrywide, regardless of geographical site. Rizvi and Lingard (2010:40) observe that since the 1950s, around the world, public policy has been used as an instrument to ensure greater participation in education in an attempt to reduce levels of social stratification. Therefore, the Namibian government needs to develop policies that aim to reduce levels of educational stratification, which is being experienced now at Namibian primary education level, so that all Namibian primary school learners can enjoy equal participation in quality education for the benefit of the country in terms of economic, political and social development. Learners in rural schools in Namibia receive poor quality education, as a result of a shortage of educational resources, while learners in urban areas receive quality education due to the availability of teaching and learning materials. As a result of education differences, Namibia is experiencing social, political and economic inequalities among its population, which need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

#### **4.3.2 Distribution policy**

Distribution policy is regarded as a guiding document in the distribution of resources to citizens on an equal basis. Rizvi and Lingard (2010:11) refer to a distribution policy as a directive in distribution of resources like human resources and other resources. This policy does not consider the condition in which citizens find themselves, whether they are disadvantaged or advantaged, but ensures that all receive equal resources. Reimers (2000:43) regards this policy as a prevention policy. For him, prevention policies focus on universal action of distribution of common resources in a way that benefit all, regardless of the different conditions in which they find themselves.

#### **4.3.3 Redistribution policy**

A redistribution policy seeks to rescue the disadvantaged in terms of resource distributions. It aims at interceding for the disadvantaged through the positive distribution of resources. In other words, a redistribution policy focuses on the need to reallocate resources equitably among the population

(Fataar, 2010:51). On the other hand, Reimers (2000:32) refers to a redistribution policy as a compensatory policy. For him, a compensatory policy focuses on the redistribution of resources and opportunities by addressing the existing inequalities. He further explains that a compensatory policy attempts to compensate for the inequalities in school chances, created by school or social inequalities (Reimers, 2000:32). In the case of Namibia, the inequality was created by the colonial education system, which led to economic, political and social inequalities.

From Rivzi and Lingard's (2010:11) experience, a redistributive policy in education was common in most liberal democratic societies during the 1960s and 1970s. They give the example of Australia, which had a disadvantaged schools programme, which sought to redistribute funding to schools enrolling disadvantaged students, in an attempt to open up opportunities for them (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010:11). This means that a redistribution policy authorises the previously disadvantaged schools to receive more resources than advantaged schools in order to ensure equity regarding resources distribution, which leads to equitable access to equal and quality education opportunities. In that situation, inequality in distribution of resources was enforced for the benefit of previously disadvantaged schools, and for the promotion of fairness and justice. It is acceptable to justify a policy that benefits a certain group on the grounds of justice, because it helps redress a historical injustice, provided such policy should appeal to every citizen's sense of justice (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:34). Waghid (2004:17) supports this as he says that liberty and opportunity, income, wealth and the basis of respect, have to be distributed equally unless an unequal distribution of one or all of these goods is to benefit the disadvantaged.

Namibia is a democratic country, which is striving to emancipate its people and balance the lives of its citizens by providing access to equitable and quality education to all citizens, needs such a redistribution policy. The country needs a policy that authorises the redistribution of resources to disadvantaged schools (schools in rural areas), as they lack teaching and learning resources compared to schools in urban areas. For equitable education to be realised in Namibia, the education system should be truly unitary and fair by providing education opportunities to all learners according to their needs (Reimers, 2000:44). Equal access to education resources at primary school level should be seriously considered in Namibia. Shusko's (2015) findings (see 1.6) indicate that at some schools Science teachers in Namibia suspend experimental activities, due to a lack of equipment. As a result, those learners are limited, and do not acquire some competencies, which reduces their education from quality to poor. From Fataar's (2010:93) points of view, if South Africa (or, in this case, Namibia) is to have an open, democratic and just society, then schooling of quality is not a luxury, but an absolute a requirement. For Namibia to be a democratic



country in the true sense, all citizens should have equal access to quality educations, or else it is a democratic country only in name

#### **4.4 The history of the Namibian education system**

This section explores the Namibian education system under German colonial rule, South African colonial rule and post-colonial rule, respectively.

##### **4.4.1 Education under German colonial rule (1884–1915)**

A German missionary society arrived in Namibia in 1884 (Kandumbu, 2005:9). They found other European missionary societies, such as the Rhenish Missionary Society (RMS), which arrived in 1842, and which had already occupied the country (Ellis, 1984:13). Even though the Germans found that the RMS had introduced some educational programmes for the Namibians, they did not consider those programmes appropriate for their children's education. In 1909, the German government made it possible to establish a primary school (German Realschule) in Windhoek to cater for white children only (Kandumbu, 2005:79). This was a decision made to ensure the continuation and reinforcement of German culture, and their children had to be taught this culture at school. This was a significant indication of the extent of racism and discrimination in the educational system that existed, preferred by the German government in Namibia. The schools of white children were adequately resourced by the German government. However, schools managed by missionaries that served black children were under-resourced (Kandumbu, 2005:79). In addition, the quality of education in white schools differed markedly as well, in such a way that schools for white children were of better quality than those of their black peers. In the hands of the missionaries, the educational system for black children was organised in the form of literacy programmes which were aimed at Bible reading, which was understood to be a platform to train black children to accept their status as second class citizens, as well as to be obedient to their white masters (Shanyanana, 2011:74).

Over the years, the damage of these education policies had become evident, as it continues to be proven that the missionary education system was not geared to equip the Namibians with both the knowledge and skills needed for the development of the country, but rather that they would be educated to be easily controlled by white people. This has been stipulated in a statement made by Hoeflich, one of the missionaries who explains, “[t]he country does not need educated Negroes; but competent, intelligent workers”. He further explains that the main focus of education will be on obedience, order, punctuality, sobriety, honesty, diligence and moderation instead of academic



learning (Ellis, 1984:14). The missionaries believed that European values and civilisation were superior to African values and civilisation, so they used Christian education to cultivate a Western culture amongst Africans, including Namibians (Ellis, 1984:14; Shanyanana, 2011:74). Bray, Clarke and Stephens (1986:2) agree with that statement, as they say that Europeans were interested in spreading civilisation and European values through Christian missionary work and education in Africa. Even though black people came to understand the importance of education and were convinced that education could empower them with the knowledge necessary to challenge the superiority of the white people, Germans feared to have educated blacks under their administration (Ellis, 1984:15). The Germans believed that once black people became knowledgeable and skilled, they might be a threat to the Germans (Ellis, 1984:15). It should therefore be clear that the German government did not support the education of black people, which created the inequality in the education system.

#### **4.4.2 Education under South African colonial rule (1915–1990)**

The South African government took over Namibia in 1915 from Germany (Shanyanana, 2011:4). When South Africa took over, its intention was to proclaim Namibia as its fifth province. The League of Nations placed Namibia under a “C” mandate, administered by South Africa. The aim of the League of Nations was that, South Africa as the administering power, should not benefit economically or militarily from Namibia, but instead should develop the territory so that the residents could determine their own future (Ellis, 1984:18). Unfortunately, the South African government did not attempt to fulfil its mandate.

Like the Germans, the South African administration wanted to control Namibia, but not to improve the missionary education of black people (Ellis, 1984:18). In 1920, some educational organisations were established and later on, a department of education was formed (Kandumbu, 2005:81). At that time, the Department of Education was responsible for schools for white people, while the schools for black people remained in the hands of missionaries (Kandumbu, 2005:81). The schools of black people were functioning under poor conditions as a result of a lack of the availability of teaching and learning materials, including physical facilities, while a large percentage of resources was allocated to schools for white people (MoBEC, 1993:13). Sadly, education for black people was aimed at preparing them to do the specific jobs that the government required, except where a few black people were to become messengers, clerks and other officials in the administrative system, which only required basic literacy and numeracy (MoBEC, 1993:2). Moreover, black people were not allowed to pursue their education to higher grades for the reason that they would continue to be inferior to the white people in terms of their education, jobs, authority, influence and incomes

(MoBEC, 1993:4). For that reason, the curriculum for black people was limited to four years of schooling, up to standard two (grade 4), consisting of writing, reading, arithmetic, religion and singing in the mother tongue (Ellis, 1984:18; Kandumbu, 2005:81). However, white people had to obtain primary and secondary education in Namibia, and proceeded to tertiary education, such as teacher training, vocational training and universities in South Africa (Ellis, 1984:20).

Over the years, a literacy programme was intensified by Finnish missionaries as was required for baptism, which led to many black people to become literate (Ellis, 1984:18). In 1924, it was reported that 4689 black people were in school in Northern Namibia (Ovamboland). That report threatened Major Hahn, who was a Native Commissioner in Namibia at that time (Ellis, 1984:18). Major Hahn was threatened by the large number of black people who became literate. However, in 1936, Hahn ordered the closure of 84 of the 164 schools of the Finnish Mission (Ellis, 1984:19). This was an attempt to discontinue this schooling and minimise the number of literate black people.

After the Second South African Angle-Boer War (1902), there was tension within the white communities of the Afrikaner and English descendants in South Africa. The British understanding was that the white community should have one common education system, but the Nationalist Afrikaners saw it as a way of destroying their culture (Ellis, 1984:21). The Afrikaners fought successfully for the separate education of their children so that they had to be taught in their mother tongue and to be introduced to their culture and history (Ellis, 1984:21). Then, in 1948, the Afrikaner Nationalists in South Africa won the election and came to power. They used the opportunity to set about the policy of apartheid and domination by white people over black people in all walks of life (Kandumbu, 2005:81). As such, Christian National Education became an official policy for white people and Bantu Education was introduced for black people (Ellis, 1984:21; Kandumbu, 2005:81). The objectives of Bantu Education was made clear by Dr Verwoerd, one of the devisers of Bantu Education, expressed as follows: “[t]here is no place for the native in the European community, above the level of certain forms of labour. Until now, he has been subjected to a school system, which drew him away from his own community and misled him by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he was not allowed to graze. When I have control of native education, I will reform it so that the natives will be taught from childhood to realise that equality with Europeans is not for them. People who believe in equality, are not teachers for natives” (Ellis, 1984:23; Kandumbu, 2005:82; Shanyanana; 2011:76). Dr Verwoerd was a member of the Eiselen Commission, which was responsible for the education of black people in South Africa.

In 1958, the Van Zyl Commission was appointed to draw up an educational structure for black and coloured people in Namibia (Ellis, 1984:23). This commission recommended for the Bantu Education syllabus from South Africa to be introduced in Namibia (Ellis, 1984:23). Moreover, the commission recommended an education levy for Africans and the establishment of a separate education department for Africans, including a language bureau, which had to be administered by white people (Ellis, 1984:23). At the same time, the Van Zyl Commission recommended to move schools of black people from missionaries to the state with the reason that the missionaries could not implement the new syllabus. This was done to reinforce apartheid, because the missionaries opposed apartheid (Ellis, 1984:25). The other reason was that the government planned to expand the enrolment figure, which the missionaries could not afford to do. The enrolment had to be increased due to fact that the government needed a large number of literate workers to occupy junior positions, as well as work as cheap labourers, positions which would not be occupied by white people (Ellis, 1984:25). As from the 1980s, a number of black people increased in school, but few of them were allowed to proceed with their education up to secondary school or vocational training (Ellis, 1984:36).

The history has proven that education during the colonial eras was not considered as a right, but rather as a privilege for the elites. In fact, there was not equal treatment of the various cultural groups in Namibia. Black people were denied the right to pursue their education beyond grade four and the numbers of enrolments were limited. The schools that white children attended, were well resourced in terms of teaching and learning aids, including qualified teachers. On the other hand, schools of black children functioned under poor conditions as a result of the lack of teaching and learning materials, as well as a lack of qualified teachers. Moreover, black people did not receive quality education as many of them had to leave school without academic knowledge, except knowing how to read and write. This was confirmed by the Advisory Committee for Human Sciences Research (ACHSR) of that time, who says that the Namibian teachers (for blacks) had very little education themselves, to provide high quality teaching (Ellis, 1984:36). In Namibia, most black people are those who live in rural areas, and few of them live in urban areas and white people. This means that only schools in urban areas were fully equipped with teaching and learning resources. In rural areas, schools were not well resourced. Black people and their communities faced injustice and discrimination in their everyday lives. As a result, white people became dominant in social, political and economic spheres. In the next section, I will discuss the Namibian education system during the post-colonial era.

#### 4.4.3 Education under the post-colonial era (1990–2017)

In 1990, Namibia got independence (Nujoma, 2001:439). The newly elected government prioritised the emancipation of its people from all forms of oppression of the past. Education reformation became one of the top priorities of the government. The government saw that it was necessary to transition the education system from an authoritarian to a democratic education system. As in many African countries, education has become a basic human right, which should be available to all people in Namibia. In 1990, the government drafted the National Constitution in which article 20 declares quality education for all, that should be accessible to every Namibian, and the state should provide the required facilities for effective education provision (MoBEC, 1993:3). In the same Constitution, article 10 proclaims equality and freedom to be enjoyed by all citizens and all persons should be treated equally before the law and no one may be discriminated against on the grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnicity, religion, social or economic status (GRN, 1990).

As it is a constitutional mandate, the government has to provide quality education to all Namibians (MoBEC, 1993:41). To provide quality education to all citizens, the government had to unite the previously divided society under one education system (MoBEC, 1993:16). However, the segregatory system of the past left a legacy of racial discrimination and differential allocation of resources, which the government through the MoBEC has to deal with. The MoBEC (1993:16) acknowledges that it was not an easy task to unify eleven education systems into a single one. On the same note, the society had different perspectives of what education for all could bring about. The previously disadvantaged groups were eager and ready to embrace the programme, which meant addressing the unequal allocation of resources and social disadvantages. At the same time, the privileged minority were concerned and even feared that the redress may lead to a decline in the quality of education, and that might have negative outcomes for them and their children. In that situation, the new government had to change the mind-set of the citizens, to make them to understand the effects of education for all (democratic education).

Democratic education in Namibia emphasises the following.

- Equal access and broad participation: All citizens are to have equal access to and participation in education and decision-making processes, especially since previously disadvantaged people, including women, were excluded.
- Lifelong learning: Everyone (youth and adults) should be learners throughout life, before school, in and after school, employed or unemployed. For the development of the country, the citizens have to develop new understanding and skills throughout their lives in order to

meet the needs of a changing economy and society. Hence, a democratic education system should make it possible for everyone in society to have an opportunity for learning and embracing a culture of lifelong learning.

- Cooperation and teamwork: All education stakeholders, teachers, learners, parents and the government should work in collaboration and share responsibility for assisting learners to be successful in their education (MoBEC, 1993:1–10).

For the government to reach its goals of education reform and to introduce democratic education, the Ministry of Education and Culture released some policies to facilitate the reform. The first policy was Toward Education for All (TEA), and later on the government released the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP), the Information and Communication Technology Policy for Education (ICT), the Strategic Plan 2012–2017, and many more. These educational policy documents were meant to facilitate the education process toward the realisation of government goals for education and the cultivation of DCE in the country. The next section focuses on the analysis of some education policy documents in relation to DCE.

#### **4.5 The analysis of the Namibian education policies**

To recapitulate, this study analysed the major education policies that affect teaching and learning at primary school level in Namibia, in order to determine the extent to which these policies contribute to the promotion of DCE in the country. The analysed policies were TEA, ETSIP, ICT and the Strategic plan 2012–2017. Therefore, the next section analyses the TEA policy.

##### **4.5.1 Toward Education for All (TEA)**

TEA is the first policy for education, formulated three years after the independence of the country in 1990. It marked the beginning of education reform, and it serves as a guiding policy for all future policies in education. This policy document declares that the South African education system, which provided preferential education to the privileged elites, has reached an end (MoBEC, 1993:2). Therefore, the new education system is aiming at accommodating all Namibian people, irrespective of colour, race, gender or age. In addition, education has become the right of every Namibian (MoBEC, 1993:2). Moreover, the TEA policy proclaims that the new education system (democratic education) is a way of increasing access, eliminating inequalities, providing fair treatment, improving quality of instruction and learning, and learning about democracy by practicing it (MoBEC, 1993:31). Actually, the MoBEC aimed at creating a democratic society through educational reform. This can only be achieved if teachers and education systems as a whole

practice democracy, and it must be a central purpose at all levels of education (MoBEC, 1993:29). In fact, an education system must support and protect democracy by helping learners to understand the rights and obligations of citizenship, and to develop skills that will enable them to be active, imaginative and responsible participants in democratic societies (MoBEC, 1993:47). The TEA policy makes it clear that democratic education will make it possible for all citizens to be active participants in governing their country, not just voters (MoBEC, 1993:10).

For the MoBEC to promote democratic education, it had to deal with a legacy of disparities and inequalities in the education system, which was left by the policies of racial discrimination. Because of previously implemented racial discrimination, some schools had highly educated teachers, adequate physical facilities and reasonably small classes, while others had teachers who had limited training, overcrowded classrooms, which were poorly equipped regarding physical facilities (MoBEC, 1993:15). Poor conditions were and still are experienced in schools in rural areas. Many primary schools in rural areas had, and still have, overcrowded classrooms, and they lack basic textbooks and classroom equipment. At the same time, many rural schools were constructed from rudimentary materials or were corrugated iron sheds and some had become severely dilapidated (MoBEC, 1993:119). Moreover, some schools in rural areas did not and still do not have laboratories, libraries and other basic teaching and learning materials (MoBEC, 1993:29). They therefore, still face the challenge of a shortage of learning and teaching facilities (Amukugo, 2017; Arreman et al., 2016; Katjavivi, 2016; Nuuyoma, 2012).

The MoBEC makes it clear that it should not accept a school system in which some of the children have sufficient textbooks in every subject, with well-equipped libraries and laboratories, while other children sit on the floor in large classes and have neither libraries nor laboratories (MoBEC, 1993:27). To address the problem of the lack of infrastructure at schools in rural areas, the MoBEC embarked on a Rural Physical Facilities Improvement Initiative Programme. This programme aimed at engaging local contractors to build classrooms, teachers' houses and ablution conveniences at schools. At the same time, the programme invited local communities to take responsibility for improving their schools and to attend to basic repairs and security (MoBEC, 1993:119).

Actually, the MoBEC aims at addressing many of the concerns that Namibians had about the education system through promoting equal access to quality education and the improvement of social, political and economic status that it could provide. Hence, it joined efforts, in cooperation with international and national agencies, as well as with non-governmental organisations, to strengthen its capacity to address its major objectives. Some of its major objectives are to improve

the quality of schooling at all levels, increase the supply of textbooks and instructional materials, implement education reform programmes, eliminate unequal resource allocation between racial groups, and between rural and urban areas, and achieve equity in access to schooling (MoBEC, 1993:123).

It was a remarkable attempt for the TEA policy to introduce the Rural Physical Facilities Improvement Initiative Programme for schools in rural areas as a means of creating fairness in resource distribution. However, the programme focused only on buildings such as classrooms, teachers' houses and ablution conveniences at schools. The TEA policy is silent about other aspects of infrastructure, such as laboratories, libraries, chairs, desks, ICT equipment, and other teaching and learning facilities, which were missing from rural schools. Even though the policy declares that the MoBEC would not allow a school system in which some learners have all the necessary teaching and learning materials, while others have nothing (MoBEC, 1993:27), it does not indicate how that imbalance is going to be redressed, or outlines any procedure to be followed to correct the situation. At the same time, the policy confirms that one of the major objectives of the MoBEC is to eliminate inequalities in resource allocation between schools in rural areas and urban areas (MoBEC, 1993:123), but it does not clarify which mechanisms are in place to tackle the problem of that inequality. This is the reason why the differences in resources availability between rural and urban area schools still exist.

On the same note, the policy calls for local communities to upgrade their schools and handle basic repairs and security (MoBEC, 1993:119), which is another way of involving communities in the development of their schools and taking part in the education of their children. At the same time, the community involvement promotes teamwork in school development. However, in that way, the inequality might remain the same, because rural communities are still at the bottom of the economic structure and simply cannot provide the kind of support to a school that a more affluent community can do. They might hardly be able to afford to repair their schools, because of economic hardship. Reimers (2000:55) support this as he says that poor parents have limited resources to support the education of their children, and only policies that explicitly address this inequality, with major redistributive purposes, could make education an equalising force in social opportunity. As such, only urban communities, where there are high rates of employment, might be able to develop their schools successfully. This means that the inequality might remain, and therefore does not support the implementation of DCE, for which the government is striving.

Moreover, the MoBEC affirms that it cannot reach the TEA goals without the active participation of local communities, and public, private and international agencies (MoBEC, 1993:11). It therefore



created a space for participation in the formulation of the TEA to the national and regional officers of the MoBEC, representatives from other ministries, government departments, universities and staff, teachers' unions, student organisations, political parties, private enterprises, non-governmental organisations and other groups concerned with education (MoBEC, 1993:17). This was done through workshops, individual consultations and seminars on education. Even though the MoBEC calls for active participation from local communities in the implementation of TEA policy, it is not clear how the local communities (ordinary citizens) were involved in the development of that policy. The democratic participation in the formulation of TEA considered the representatives from different ministries and individual consultants, but neglected the voices of the poor, labourers and ordinary citizens. In that case, ordinary citizens are treated as passive subjects of legislation to be ruled, when they were supposed to be autonomous agents who can participate directly or through their representatives in decision-making that govern their own society (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:3). They were supposed to be given an opportunity to deliberate and justify their reasons in public, or demand of their representatives to do so, with the aim of justifying the law under which they must live. The representatives were required to present their reasons to citizens for public scrutiny and criticism in order to reach common understanding, which promotes mutual respect among free and equal citizens. Free and equal citizenship is about the kind of people we become and the kind of people we encourage our children to become (Callan, 1997:2). Moreover, if ordinary citizens are given an opportunity for deliberation and communal decision-making, they often reach better, more inclusive decisions than the ones reached by representatives acting alone (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:8).

Apart from teachers' representative unions and student organisations, it seems that teachers and learners did not participate in the discussions concerning the formation of the TEA policy. My point here is that, representatives and political officials cannot rightly claim that they know what favourable policies are right for their fellow citizens, so they need to solicit views from the citizens who are affected by the results of the policies (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:22). This is because, when policies are formulated without the active participation of all members who are affected by the results of those policies, they are likely to be incomplete in many ways (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:124). More importantly, teachers who are the implementers of the policies, are supposed to be active participants in the formulation of the policies and allowed to voice problems they encountered from practical experience. These issues would be some of the most pressing, and addressing them effectively could go a long way towards relieving the burdens. At the same time, the teachers could identify the possible challenges to the implementation of the policy. On the same



note, if learners could be given an opportunity to speak their minds, they could reveal the deep moral tensions of the society from where they come (Callan, 1997:206), which could guide policy objectives aimed at addressing problems that the learners are facing in the society.

For learners to become active and free citizens, they need to be introduced to knowledge and skills needed for democratic deliberation, and engage in deliberations on various platforms and levels. In so doing, the education system develops the capacity of learners to understand different views, share their understanding with other people in a deliberative process of moral arguments with a view towards mutually justifiable decisions (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:61). However, the MoBEC failed to demonstrate democracy to the teachers and learners, even though it expects these teachers to teach those learners about democratic citizenship by practicing it and making them understand that democracy means more than voting. In fact, if the ideology of democratic citizenship is to be effectively implemented, these policies need to be put into clear effect so that citizens under these policies can demonstrate them through positive action. This will provide learners with a strong example of how a democratic citizenry should conduct itself.

#### **4.5.2 Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP)**

This educational policy document (ETSIP) was enacted in 2007, seventeen years after the independence of Namibia (Government of the Republic of Namibia [GRN], 2007). ETSIP is a fifteen-year strategic plan, which is phased in over three five-year cycles. This strategic plan is intended to improve all phases or levels of education in Namibia, such as early childhood development and pre-primary education, general education (Grades 1–12), vocational education and training, tertiary education and training, knowledge creation and innovation, adult education and lifelong learning, and information communication technology in education (GRN, 2007).

The formulation of ETSIP was necessitated by the findings of the study conducted by the World Bank “Human Capital and Knowledge for Economic Growth with Equity”. On the one hand, the study reveals that the Namibian education system was very weak, and cannot support the country to reach its national development goals specifically, or the goal of transforming Namibia to knowledge-driven growth and equitable social development (GRN, 2007:2). The weakness of the education system is clearly observed from different dimensions, such as that many children were not acquiring the basic skills of functional literacy and numeracy (GRN, 2007:v). As a result of the weakness of the education system, the country experienced a shortage of skilled workers of different types and levels (GRN, 2007:1). On the other hand, the study finds that the progress towards equity in education had been at a slow pace. Namibia has been at the bottom of

international ranking in terms of economic growth, and she relies wholly on education to realise her vision 2030, which is to join the ranks of high-income countries and afford all her citizens a quality of life that is comparable to that of the developed world (GRN, 2007:1). Therefore, the government expects education to produce citizens that are capable of developing and driving the country to a knowledge-based country.

The findings of the World Bank study sensitised the government through the Ministry of Education to design ETSIP in order to address the shortcomings in the education system. One of the main aims of ETSIP is to strengthen the supply of middle- to high-level skilled workers to meet the labour market demands, and to contribute towards the achievement of overall national development goals (GRN, 2007:2). Some of the national goals are to accelerate economic growth and equitable social development to create opportunities for employment and eradicate poverty, and to curb the spread of HIV/AIDS (GRN, 2007:1). For the education system to support the government in achieving its national goals, the GRN (2007:1–3) sets these goals for ETSIP:

- to produce citizens with the appropriate knowledge and technology, and who are able to apply their acquired knowledge to improve the production process and value of Namibian natural resources;
- to contribute to the achievement of equitable social development;
- to expand equality of opportunity and the capacity of senior secondary education and training;
- to strengthen the system of prevention of and minimise the spread of HIV/AIDS; and
- to improve the equitable distribution of education resources, inputs and outputs (learning outcomes).

In order for the education system to achieve its goals, ETSIP has to attend to some of the contributing factors responsible for the past failure of education, like the inequality in the distribution of resources that was experienced in the previously disadvantaged especially, in northern regions (GRN, 2007:19). The regions in Northern Namibia are characterised by rural area schools, which have few physical, human and financial resources (GRN, 2007:19).

To address the problem of inequality and apply fairness in resource distribution, ETSIP introduces a programme of equitable, pro-poor distribution of resources. For the schools to benefit from that programme, they first have to meet resource input norms, in order to qualify to apply for normative per capita financing (GRN, 2007:26). However, schools that fail to meet a resource input norm, but they meet the learning targets, can qualify for conditional grants from the Education Development

Fund (EDF) (GRN, 2007:26). At the same time, libraries for all schools, colleges of education, and teacher resource centres, will be upgraded with books and other resources, with special attention paid to those at previously disadvantaged institutions (GRN, 2007:23). The GRN acknowledges that the shortage of textbooks, library books and other learning materials has been threatening the quality of education (GRN, 2007:v).

As was discussed above, the schools that fail to meet the resource input norms, but meet the learning targets, can still benefit from EDF. However, the policy is silent about the schools that neither meet the learning targets, nor the resource input norms, and how they can acquire resources, since they do not qualify to benefit from the normative financing programme and EDF. Those schools will remain unattended to in terms of teaching and learning resources. If the low performance of the schools that fail to meet the learning targets is a result of lack of teaching and learning materials, then those schools need to be equipped with resources in order to boost their performances. The question remains as to how these schools will be assisted to improve their performances. Therefore, equity and equality will not be realised even though it was the priority of the programme. This weakens the quality of DCE.

Similarly, ETSIP proposes for the upgrading of libraries at all schools by providing books and other library materials, but the policy is mute about schools that do not have libraries. There is not any proposal for the schools that do not have libraries, as to how they will benefit from the library programme. For those reasons, ETSIP fails to deliver equitable education with equal opportunity to quality education. Therefore, ETSIP does not promote DCE in the country. In the TEA policy, the MoBEC (1993:25) claims that equality and equity are of special importance in Namibia, since the country has a history of racial discrimination and inequality. There is still a line separating colonial-era and post-colonial-era education systems in terms of resource distribution. At this stage, equality and equity have not received the special attention that they deserve for the realisation of DCE.

Despite the fact that ETSIP provided a space for democratic participation for the representatives from the MoE at regional and national levels, international development partners and other consultants through forums and consultative meetings, it did not provide enough space for all citizens to participate in discussion and to contribute to the development of the policy. Only the representatives from MoE and consultants had an opportunity to participate, but not the citizens at the grassroots level. Even though the representatives participated in democratic decision-making, they did not have a space for deliberative democracy. I am arguing for democratic deliberation for the reason that it encourages participants to learn from one another and enable them to recognise their individual and collective misunderstandings, and develop new understanding and knowledge

that lead to the development of successful policies (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:157). Through democratic deliberation, participants establish an understanding of both themselves and the political community to which they belong (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:65). In that way, they can make sound decisions and develop responsible policies. More importantly, decisions that are reached through democratic deliberation where everyone was listened to, has greater legitimacy than decisions from any other method of decision-making (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:129). At the same time, deliberative democracy helps participants to develop the virtues of citizenship for which the Namibian government is striving, and encourages citizens to consider political issues in a public-spirited mode (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:30). Moreover, since ETSIP is trying to redress social injustice, specifically the injustice in resources distribution inherited from the colonial education system, democratic deliberation could be an appropriate medium for discussion, because deliberative deliberation is a better way for dealing with injustice than other decision-making model (Kymlicka & Thompson, 2000:42). As such, ETSIP has not made a visible attempt to promote DCE.

#### **4.5.3 Information and Communication Technology (ICT) policy for education: ICT integration for equity and excellence in education**

The ICT policy was developed by the Ministry of Basic Education through the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) in 1995, and it was later revised in 2000 (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2005:3). Then, in 2005, it was updated by a mixed working group established from the two Ministries of Education (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, and Ministry of Higher Education Training and Employment Creation), which become the latest version of the ICT policy for education (MoE, 2005). This was done through workshops.

However, two major statements, that include vision and mission, inform the ICT policy. The vision of the ICT policy is to contribute to the achievement of Namibia Vision 2030, which is to construct global partnerships based on common interest, obligation, and equality premised on good governance, democracy, and human rights (MoE, 2005:i). Furthermore, the mission of the ICT policy is explicitly to articulate the relevance, responsibility, and effectiveness of integrating ICT in education, in order to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (MoE, 2005:i).

Moreover, the ICT policy was established to promote the use and development of ICT in education and training. In fact, the integration of ICT in education can greatly contribute to the equity and quality of education, which will improve the lives of the Namibian citizens, as they will be able to communicate with others worldwide (MoE, 2005:i). The purpose of the ICT policy is to co-ordinate

the development, efficient delivery and quality use of technology, to ensure ICT integration for excellence and equity in education (MoE, 2005:i). At the same time, the policy is aiming at preparing all Namibian learners, students, teachers and communities to be able to participate in the world economy by the use of technology. In that way, the policy is contributing to the achievement of a knowledge-based society, which is one of the Namibia's Vision 2030 goals (GRN, 2004).

The world demands of education institutions to establish and use fully equipped media centres with printed materials and access to global information by electronic means. Namibia is no exception (MoE, 2005:2). For Namibia to increase and strengthen the use of ICT in education institutions, the MoE sets the following goals for the ICT policy:

- produce ICT literate citizens;
- produce knowledgeable people who are able to work with and take part in the new economy arising from ICT and related developments;
- leverage ICT to support and facilitate learning for the benefit of all learners and teachers across the curriculum;
- improve the efficiency of educational administration and management at every level, from the classroom, school library, through the school and on to the whole education sector;
- widen access to quality educational services for learners at all levels of the education system; and to
- set specific criteria and targets to help classify and categorise the different development levels of using ICT in education (MoE, 2005:4).

In order to achieve these goals, and measure progress in the implementation of ICT in education, the MoE (2005:6–7) establishes five development levels.

**Level 1:** This level requires a small computer room to be available at a site, equipped with two or more computers. These computers are used for teaching ICT skills such as basic computer skills, learning how to use a word processor and getting information from the internet. In addition, at this level, the staff will have the skills to retrieve information, prepare documents and use school management software. At least one or two staff members will have as a minimum a basic ICT literacy qualification. At the same time, learners will spend about an hour a month using a computer, and the site will have some audiovisual facilities.

**Level 2:** In addition to the achievement at level one, all teaching and administrative staff members will have access to a computer (at least one computer for every five staff members, and one to ten for learners/students), and should be able to use the internet and email, as well as a word processor.

At this level, the site is connected to the internet whereby learning materials are often downloaded by teaching staff. Moreover, a significant quantity of communication and administration with the MoE, is done via email and web services. At the same time, students will spend about an hour every two weeks on a computer and at least two of the staff members will have an ICT qualification. Moreover, the site will have a classroom equipped with a computer and projector system, and/or the ability to display audiovisual materials to learners.

**Level 3:** At this level, a large part of the work is done with the application of ICT and all learners have access to a computer (more than one computer per ten learners). In addition, the site will have an internet connection whereby learners are able to use a computer, communicate by email, search for information using web-based systems, and create output by using a word processor. Moreover, teaching staff will be able to download, create and upload learning materials, and some computer-based training materials are used to support teaching. At least 30% of the staff members will have some ICT qualification. Students or learners will spend about two hours a week using a computer. At this stage, the site will have one or more classrooms equipped with computers and projector systems, and/or the ability to display audiovisual materials to learners.

**Level 4:** At this level, much of the work is done with the support of ICT, all learners have access to computers (more than one computer per five students or learners), and all staff members have access to a computer (one computer per staff member). The site has a fixed internet connection, corresponding to the number of students or learners and staff members. In addition, all students or learners are able to use a computer, communicate by email, find information using the web-based systems, create output using a word processor, spreadsheet and presentation software. Teaching staff download and create learning materials on computers. Moreover, more than half of the communication with the Ministry of Education is done via email and web services, and computer-based training materials support teaching. At the same time, modelling software is available to allow students or learners to experiment and investigate with computer-based training software, supporting the teachers. More than half of the staff will have an ICT qualification, and students or learners will spend more than one hour a day using the computer, projector systems, and/or the ability to display audiovisual materials to- students.

**Level 5:** At this level, it is expected that all students or learners and staff have good access to a computer and most of the staff will have an ICT qualification. In addition, a large number (more than 50%) of staff will have an advanced ICT qualification, and a good internet link will be in available. Moreover, ICT subjects such as programming, database design and usage, and system configuration will be implemented in schools. Computer-based training will be popularly used to

support teaching, using a blended learning approach, and ICT will be used in communication and administration. Students or learners spend at least four hours a day using a computer and the site will have a large number of the classrooms equipped with a computer and a projector system, and/or the ability to display audiovisual materials to students or learners. Students or learners will do most of their work using the computer and they will be able to obtain employment in the ICT job market and related industries. The policy selects priority areas that are to receive ICT equipment and training, such as: colleges of education and related in-service programmes;

- secondary schools;
- teacher education programmes at tertiary institutions;
- vocational training, and
- primary schools, libraries and community centres, adult education centres and special needs education (MoE, 2005:9).

It indicates that the MoE in Namibia is committed to enhance equity and quality in education by introducing ICT and providing schools with ICT facilities on an equal basis, as an attempt to promote DCE in the country. The use of technology in education will be a channel for citizens to explore the world, and gain an understanding of and knowledge for the improvement of their lives. In this way, the Ministry of Education is playing its part towards the realisation of a knowledge-based society.

However, the ICT policy is silent about the previously marginalised schools. It indicates that the distribution of ICT resources must show no regional bias and the distribution will be based on the proportion of students per region. This means that if the region has 10% of the total number of students or learners in the country, then it gets 10% of the resources, whether that school already has some of those materials or not (MoE, 2005:9). In that situation, schools that already have some resources, specifically those in urban areas, will get more resources and will end up having more resources compared to those schools that have nothing. This indicates that the differences in resources availability at schools will remain. However, the history of the Namibian education system and literature (Amukugo, 2017; Arreman et al., 2016; GRN, 2007; Katjavivi, 2016; MoBEC, 1993; Nuuyoma, 2012) shows that schools in rural areas are suffering from a lack of resources, compared to those in urban areas. Schools in rural areas will operate with fewer resources, compared to those in urban areas. That disparity is against African values, which are guiding principles of DCE. In Africa, it is believed that if one receives more resources than the disadvantaged do, then the extra resources should be shared with the disadvantaged (Broodryk, 2010:127). It is not allowed for someone to eat, while the other one goes hungry, neither someone



to sleep warmly while the other one is out in the cold (Broodryk, 2010:127). It is expected that the underprivileged should be given more resources to get to an equal footing with the privileged, because Africa believes in equity and equality.

On the same note, the policy shows that the availability of electricity and telecommunication services at schools is one of the determining factors for the provision of ICT facilities and training (MoE, 2005:9). Electricity and telecommunication services are mostly found at schools in urban areas, and at very few schools in rural areas. Therefore, the development in technology will be high in urban areas and almost unnoticeable in rural areas. To worsen the situation, the ICT policy is silent about how the schools without electricity and telecommunication facilities, will benefit from the programme.

Moreover, this policy requests the development of a specific curriculum for ICT subjects, which should aim at promoting the skills of accessing, managing and processing information, collaborative working skills, problem solving and the ability to learn concepts (MoE, 2005:12). However, the ICT curriculum will be applicable only to schools that have ICT facilities. Therefore, learners at schools that do not have electricity and telecommunication facilities, remain disadvantaged and excluded from acquiring knowledge beyond their classrooms, knowledge that they could get from the use of technology. These learners remain unfamiliar with the world of technology, which will be a barrier for them to participate in activities that relate to technology. That limitation will affect their social, economic and political lives negatively in the future, and it promotes socio-economic inequality in the country, which is the problem that DCE is striving to address. Even though the MoE is trying to promote equity and quality in education, it cannot be done if previously disadvantaged schools are not given special attention in resources distribution.

In addition, the ICT policy was developed by NIED, and later a mixed working group drawn from the two Ministries of Education (MoE, 2005:3) updated it. There is no indication as to how ordinary citizens were included in the decision-making of the development and updating process of the policy. The policy lacks the inclusion of the voices of the masses such as teachers, learners, parents, labourers, the uneducated and the disabled citizens. On the same note, the ICT policy was developed through workshops. This indicates that there was no a space for democratic deliberation, where participants could exchange ideas for common understanding. In that regard, the ICT policy fails to promote DCE.



#### 4.5.4 Ministry of Education Strategic Plan 2012–2017

The Ministry of Education Strategic Plan 2012–2017 (MoE, 2012) is one of the key policy documents that support teaching and learning in Namibia. It was developed in 2012, to provide the strategic direction and framework for the MoE in order to achieve its vision, mission and strategic objectives during the five-year period from 2012 to 2017 (MoE, 2012:iv). In addition, the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 was designed to reform the education sector in order to contribute to the realisation of Namibia Vision 2030, and the achievement of the overall national development goals (MoE, 2012:1). The overall national target for Namibia is to join the ranks of high-income countries, and all of its citizens to have a quality life that is comparable to that of the developed countries by 2030 (MoE, 2012:1). For the Namibian education system to contribute to the realisation of Vision 2030, the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 aims to provide accessible and equitable quality education and training for a skilled, productive and competitive nation (MoE, 2012:1). Therefore, the objectives of the Strategic Plan were developed to attain high passing rates at primary and secondary schools in order to meet the national need of human resources, which will transition Namibia to a knowledge-based economy (MoE, 2012:1). For its commitment to Vision 2030, the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 incorporates key factors of the National Development Plan 4 (NDP4) in its higher level statements (mandate, vision, mission and core values), strategic themes and objectives. The NDP4 includes factors such as human resources, planning and development, job creation and reduction of unemployment, and lastly, a reduction in the inequality of income (MoE, 2012:1). Therefore, it was expected that this Strategic Plan 2012–2017 would respond to the education chapter of the NDP4.

Higher-level statements that include the MoE mandate, vision, mission and core values inform the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 (MoE, 2012:4). The mandate specifies the core purposes and duties of the MoE, which are to educate and train for national development. The mandate is delivered from the Namibian Constitution, article 20 (see 4.2.3) and other legislative acts, such as the Education Act (Act No. 16 of 2001) (GRN, 2001), Vocational Education (Act No. 1 of 2008) (GRN, 2008), Namibia Library and Information Service Act (Act No. 4 of 2000) (GRN, 2000) and Archives Act (Act No. 12 of 1992) (GRN, 1992). The vision of the MoE is to be excellent in providing quality education and training for national development. The mission is to provide accessible and equitable quality education and training for a skilled, productive and competitive nation (MoE, 2012:6). The core values include integrity, accountability, commitment, respect, empathy, teamwork, and professionalism (MoE, 2012:7). The Strategic Plan 2012–2017 (MoE, 2012) clarifies the mandate and mission of the MoE to make it easy for the employees to understand what is expected from them. It therefore aims to empower staff members to participate actively in developing and shaping

the future of the education system and build strong teamwork (MoE, 2012:4). In addition, the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 is founded on five strategic themes, namely teaching and learning, leadership and management, infrastructure, regulatory framework, and stakeholders' relations (MoE, 2012:18). The strategic themes are the focus areas of the Strategic Plan 2012–2017, and each of these strategic themes has specific objectives to be achieved, as is demonstrated below.

- Teaching and learning: This theme focuses on providing accessible and equitable quality education to all Namibian learners. Therefore, it emphasises learners' ability to acquire new knowledge or assist them in modifying existing knowledge, behaviour, skills and values.
- Leadership and management: This theme places emphasis on visionary leadership and management by creating an environment for staff members to perform their duties to the best of their abilities. Therefore, it is expected that leaders and managers should be able to use the available resources to reach the set goals and objectives successfully.
- Infrastructure: It focuses on accelerating the pace of development and maintaining the physical facilities that are required by the MoE to fulfil its mandate.
- Regulatory framework: The focal point of this theme concerns the laws, policies and regulations that describe the legal requirements to offer quality education and training, and to ensure that the education system is properly administered.
- Stakeholders' relations: It focuses on the strategic alliances and relationships between the MoE and its key stakeholders in their pursuit of common goals and objectives. It also aims at building a strong partnership between the MoE and stakeholders that is based on trust, equality, mutual understanding and respect, and obligations (MoE, 2012:8).

However, the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 has not attempted to attend to the inequality in teaching and learning facilities that is experienced between schools in rural areas and schools in urban areas. Even though the MoE is promising to provide equitable quality education to all Namibian learners, quality education cannot be realised in the absence of teaching and learning resources. Quality education can only be actualised in urban schools where adequate teaching and learning facilities are found, but not in rural schools, where teaching and learning materials are limited.

Moreover, the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 was developed from an intensive and broad consultative process, which included various participants such as key stakeholders (representatives at international, national, regional and local levels) and staff members of the MoE (MoE, 2012:2). The development was based on the information from main sources, which include the following: a situational analysis conducted, the review of relevant legislation, policy documents such as Vision

2030 and ETSIP, and other high-level documents (MoE, 2012:2). In light of the information that was gathered, the representatives identified the needs and expectations of the public, which the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 had to meet, and then the plan was enacted (MoE, 2012:2).

However, the development of the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 does not indicate how other stakeholders such as ordinary citizens, teachers, parents and learners were involved in the development process of the plan. In addition to this, the needs and expectations to be addressed by the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 were identified by the representatives only, not by the public. This is problematic, due to the fact that it is not possible for the representatives to be able to identify all the needs and expectations of other people, rather than their own interests. From a democratic perspective, the information from the review of legislation, document policies and situational analyses, was supposed to be brought to the public for deliberation, where everyone could have an opportunity to give opinions and be able to justify their own reasons. The public would have been able to criticise and scrutinise the information for a better decision than that of the representatives alone. In so doing, it could lead to the formulation of the plan, which could attend to the needs and expectations of the public, rather to those of the representatives only. In that regard, the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 did not contribute the promotion of DCE in Namibia.

#### **4.6 The implication of DCE for teaching and learning**

The Namibian education policies that were analysed in this study indicate that education at primary level has not yet reached the level of DCE, for which the government is striving. Even though access to schools has been achieved, as the government has managed to build schools countrywide (Amukugo, 2017:60; Shanyanana, 2011:94), some of the characteristics of DCE are still missing. Therefore, it is crucial to discuss the implications of DCE for teaching and learning.

In DCE, teaching and learning take place in a deliberative way in which freedom, equality, equity, access and justice are the leading principles. Equality helps everyone to develop a sense of equal worth, which prevents feelings of being marginalised and excluded (Waghid, 2002:28). School systems in democratic societies like Namibia, should teach future citizens the knowledge and skills needed for democratic deliberation and thus prepare them to become free and active participants in society (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:35). The knowledge that learners need for democratic deliberation include an understanding of political and economic systems, as well as world history, while the skills they need include literacy, numeracy and critical thinking (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:35). By inculcating components of democratic deliberation, education systems produce future citizens that are effective and productive in societies. Therefore, schools should aim to develop the

capacity of learners to understand different views, communicate their understanding to others and engage in the deliberation of moral arguments with a view towards making beneficial decisions (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:61). In this regard, learners should be able to provide reasonable justifications for their arguments, learn to listen to those who have different opinions, and be able to ask for justifications for reaching mutual understanding. For that reason, DCE is expected to prepare young people to appreciate their natural diversity and to work in collaboration by respecting common values, such as tolerance, human rights and democracy (Costandius, Bitzer & Waghid, 2015:78). Through democratic education, people acquire knowledge, which enables them to debate about matters that affect their lives negatively, like sexual relationships, social justice, the use of violence, respect for authority, and racism (Lockyer, Crick & Annette, 2003:65).

However, democracy is best learnt in democratic settings where participation is encouraged, views can be openly expressed and discussed, and where freedom of expression for both teachers and learners take place, in consideration of fairness and justice (Lambert & Machon, 2001:186). In this regard, participants in deliberative democracy commit themselves to justice for the sake of democracy (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:40). Therefore, learners should be given equal opportunities to participate in discussions concerning their learning (Purkey & Novak, 1996:116). In this respect, teachers should encourage all learners to invest themselves in discussions during lessons in which they have to interpret meanings, give opinions, compare and contrast ideas or combine factors to form general principles.

Teaching and learning in democratic practice provide an open and free dialogue, which promotes social responsibility (Curren, 2007:37). To promote social responsibilities in learners, teachers must encourage learners to explore their own values, rights and responsibilities through class activities that reinforce moral reasoning, democratic decision-making and cultural diversity. Those types of activities enable learners to develop self-understanding, personal responsibility and self-governance toward themselves and to others. The opportunity for learners to participate in group activities creates a chance for them to realise their differences, appreciate their cultural diversity and promote respect among themselves. Therefore, it is important for teachers to understand that the participation of learners in democratic activities is an educational means to develop their intellectual and social potential (Purkey & Novak, 1996:8). However, intellectual development does not take place through passive processes. Rather, it takes place in a process comprised of physical and mental activities (Tabulawa, 2013:67). Therefore, learners must be given the opportunity to practice their intellectual and political skills in order to realise their responsibilities appropriate for their intellectual and social development level in school (Curren, 2007:162). By so doing, learners'

creativity and critical thinking capacities will be expanded. That is one of the aims of teaching and learning in DCE.

Moreover, citizenship education involves equipping children with intellectual skills necessary to evaluate ways of life different from that of their parents, because the capabilities necessary for choice among good lives are also necessary for choice among good societies (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:52). Through citizenship education, children are moulded and become valuable assets of the society, with knowledge and understanding different from that of our parents, since DCE focuses on the development of critical thinking skills, and personal and social values. Therefore, it is important for a democratic education system to equip Namibian children with the necessary knowledge and understanding, which was missed by their parents, due to the unavailability of educational opportunities in their time. In so doing, these children will be able to contribute meaningfully to the development and upgrading of their communities. Hence, the objectives and competencies for teaching and learning should be developed to suit citizenship education, which enhances and strengthens learners understanding, thinking critically, creating their own ideas, responding to contradictory views, supporting or changing opinions and acknowledging the views of others (Lockyer et al., 2003:91).

Generally, African traditional structures emphasised the domination and subordination of children, children must always learn from elders, and there is very little of value that elders can learn from children (Tabulawa, 2013:100). In other words, children were expected to do whatever elders instructed them to do, and there was little of importance elders could learn from children. That was an authoritarian education. However, with the dawn of democracy, modern African culture has embraced democracy, which allows elders to value ideas from children. Therefore, in DCE, learners and teachers learn from each other. The teacher should not be regarded as someone who knows everything, but should be a facilitator of the teaching and learning process. At the same time, a learner should not be regarded as someone who knows nothing or who is passive, but he or she should be at the centre (as an active participant) of teaching and learning (Purkey & Novak, 1996:9). In this regard, teachers should understand the backgrounds of their learners. This is because, some learners come from family structures in which children are submissive and dominated by elders, while some come from oppressive social structure, which could have negatively influenced their lives and prevented them from active participation. It is therefore important for the teacher to create a supportive and inviting environment for all learners, so that they can have equal opportunities to share ideas. The teacher should try to open a collective discussion, which is inclusive in nature, and must encourage the inclusion of everyone in the class

(Broodryk, 2006:132). They should invoke a spirit of inspiring everyone to express him- or herself in more detail, while others are listening attentively for mutual understanding (Broodryk, 2006:142). As such, both teachers and learners are encouraged to be active listeners before they judge. Active listening helps everyone to understand others' views well, which creates new perspectives and leads to a broad understanding (Broodryk, 2006:141).

Moreover, teaching and learning in DCE should take place respecting the values of African culture, such as humanness, respect, caring, compassion and sharing. Therefore, teachers and learners have to respect each other as human beings, and understand that they are people through other people (Broodryk, 2006:22). Hence, their survival and success depend on the contributions and efforts of others. Therefore, they need to value the existence of everyone, regardless of gender, social or economic background. It is important for teachers to know that appreciation and recognition of learners, is a strong encouragement, which builds self-esteem and contribute positively to their academic performance. On the same note, teachers should promote caring relationship during their lessons so that learners will do the same to others, thus develop a compassionate mentality, both in teachers and learners. A sense of compassion helps teachers and learners to act empathetically and with a willingness to help one another. Therefore, future citizens need to develop some imaginative sympathy for others whose experience and identity incline them to see political questions in ways that differ systematically from their own (Callan, 1997:8).

Furthermore, teaching and learning in DCE should embrace a culture of sharing. Teachers and learners should understand that everyone has a talent, which might differ from others, which they need to share for a better life. Some have more material resources than others, while some have more knowledge and understanding of certain aspects, which they need to share in a spirit of cooperation as human beings (Broodryk, 2010:127). Apart from sharing material things and knowledge, they also need to share happiness and sorrow. They can share happiness by celebrating their birthdays together, and share sorrow with those who experience problems and try to help when it is possible. More importantly, a spirit of respect, caring, compassion and sharing, promotes unity at school level and shape learners to become good and responsible future citizens to themselves, as well to others.

#### **4.7 Summary of the chapter**

The chapter discussed the meaning of policy, education policy as well as the types of policies. Furthermore, it explored the Namibian education system under German colonial rule, South African colonial rule and post-colonial rule, respectively. Moreover, the chapter analysed some of the key

education policy documents such as TEA, ETSIP, ICT and Strategic Plan 2012–2017 that support teaching and learning in Namibia. The purpose of the analysis was to determine the extent to which the education system in Namibia is informed by values of DCE, such as access, quality, equity and democracy. However, the analysed policies indicate that the MoE has made efforts to promote DCE since the independence of the country (1990–2017). Therefore, it is commendable that the government, through the MoE, has increased access to education opportunity by building schools countrywide. Thus, the goal of access has been achieved. Even though the goal of access to education opportunity has been met, equity has not been considered, which overshadow all other principles of DCE to be realised. This is because, the analysed policies have not made a significant attempt to attend to the needs of the disadvantaged schools. The historical background of the Namibian education system indicates that during the colonial eras (German and South African colonial eras) schools in urban areas were privileged in terms of teaching and learning resources, compared to those in rural areas. However, the policies that were studied in this study show that the government, after the independence of the country, has not made an effort to address the inequality in teaching and learning facilities, which was inherited from the colonial education systems. As a result, schools in rural areas are still disadvantaged, and are not able to provide quality education.

Moreover, the analysed policies reveal that the development of these policies did not invite the participation of all stakeholders. Only representatives from different ministries and unions, political parties, international development partners and individual consultants participated in the development of these policies. Ordinary citizens, parents, teachers and learners did not take part in the development of the policies. In the same vein, participants in the development of these policies did not get an opportunity to engage in democratic deliberation. Therefore, it is noted that the exclusion of some stakeholders from the development process of these policies leads to the failure of these policies to attend to the needs and expectations of all stakeholders.

Furthermore, the chapter discussed the implications of DCE for teaching and learning. It was indicated that teaching and learning in DCE takes place in a deliberative way, whereby both teachers and learners have freedom of expression in order to prepare them to become productive and responsible citizens.



## **Chapter 5: How the Namibian primary education policies promote DCE in the country**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides an evaluation of the successful contribution of primary education policies to the promotion of DCE in Namibia. The evaluation was carried out based on two primary functions of a school, namely teaching and learning, by measuring the level of access, quality, equity and democracy, which form the basis of DCE. From the analysis of the TEA, ETSIP, ICT and the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 policies, which was reported on in Chapter 4, I came to the broad understanding that, in Namibian primary education policies, little attention is given to the promotion of DCE since the focus in the policies is only on access, while neglecting equity, quality and democracy. In other words, all the analysed Namibian primary education policies prioritise access for all Namibians – regardless of race, gender or age – to education and basic social resources on equal bases rather to redress inequality in access to quality education, the promotion of social development and democratic participation. The primary aim of all the analysed Namibian primary education policies is to –

- increase access to quality education;
- eliminate inequalities and promote fair treatment throughout the education system;
- improve quality of teaching and learning;
- promote equitable social development;
- accelerate economic growth; and
- enhance democracy (GRN, 2007:1; MoBEC, 1993:31; MoE, 2005:i; 2012:1).

However, these policies are not clear on how these objectives are to be implemented practically for the promotion of DCE. Consequently, DCE is sparsely demonstrated in the Namibian primary education policies.

In the next sections, I am going to discuss how the Namibian primary education policies promote equitable access to quality education, social development and democratic participation, which are the requirements of DCE as discussed in Chapter 2.

### **5.2 How the Namibian primary education policies promote equitable access to quality education in the country**

Namibia is one of the countries, which attended the World Conference in 1990, and adopted a World Declaration on education for all, as well as its framework for implementation (MoBEC, 1993:3). In the same year (1990), the Namibian government proclaimed Education For All in the



country, through article 20 of the Constitution (GRN, 1990:10). Education For All is the foundation for DCE, and entails quality education to reach every Namibian, irrespective of colour, gender or age. Therefore, the government, through the MoE, developed several education policies to facilitate the implementation of DCE. In this study, an analysis of some of the key policies that support teaching and learning in Namibia has been conducted. This was necessary to determine how these policies contribute to the promotion of DCE in the country. The policies that have been analysed, include TEA, ETSIP, ICT and Strategic Plan 2012–2017.

As previously mentioned in this study, the TEA is the first education policy in the Namibian post-colonial education system, and it is the guiding document for all future policies in education (MoBEC, 1993). The TEA sets promising goals for the realisation of DCE. The goals are access, equity, quality and democracy. It was believed that TEA would enhance democracy in Namibia through education. However, Namibia has a long way to go in order to achieve this goal for thick democracy. Thereafter, ETSIP (GRN, 2007), ICT (MoE, 2005) and Strategic Plan 2012–2017 (MoE, 2012) were established to support TEA in the provision and enhancement of equal opportunity to quality education in the country. These policies are geared to transport the country towards a knowledge-based society.

Even though the TEA, ETSIP, ICT and Strategic Plan 2012–2017 policies put forward, constitute sound goals, they have not yielded the expected results. This is because the disparities in educational opportunities that were experienced during the colonial eras, still exist. Consequently, the equal-opportunity access to quality education, as promised by the TEA, ETSIP, ICT and Strategic Plan policies does not take place. In this regard, schools in the rural areas are still disadvantaged, as they do not have access to adequate educational resources, compared to schools in urban areas.

As previously mentioned in this study, the study conducted by Nuuyoma (2012:47), reveals the imbalance in the distribution of ICT equipment between rural and urban schools. She experiences that schools in rural areas have fewer ICT facilities than those in urban areas. Furthermore, another study conducted by Shusko (2015) shows that science teachers at some schools are unable to incorporate scientific experiments into their curriculum, due to a lack of equipment. Similarly, Arreman et al. (2016: 240), in their study indicate that the poor physical conditions of rural schools still exists. On the same note, Katjavivi (2016), in his speech at the Forum of the Commonwealth Council of Education, confirms that schools in rural and remote areas of Namibia face a big challenge concerning shortages of qualified teachers, textbooks, permanent classrooms and ICT equipment. Moreover, Amukugo (2017:82) finds that schools in rural areas are still disadvantaged

as a result of an inequality in resource distribution and access to environments conducive to learning. Considering this, there is at present no promising evidence to indicate that the post-colonial education system is capable of decreasing the gap between previously disadvantaged and privileged schools in terms of equal access to quality education. Bearing this in mind, there is no significant attempt being made to redress these existing disparities. The TEA, ETSIP and ICT policies have neglected equity, which inevitably results in the poor quality of education, which in turn, hinders other DCE goals from taking place.

According to Hailombe (2011:26), equity is related to the concepts of justice, fairness and equal opportunities. Hence, equity is geared to realise equal access to services, which enables citizens to participate in social and political processes (Hailombe, 2011:26). On the same note, Dobie, Arthur and Jones (2010:10) believe that equity can be realised once people are treated according to their needs, instead of simply being treated equally in terms of rights and respect. Therefore, equity in education can be realised by the way resources are distributed to disadvantaged groups (Hutmacher, Cochrane & Bottani, 2001:265). However, in order to treat all persons equally and provide them with equal opportunities, society must give more attention in terms of benefits, to those with fewer assets and those from a lower social position, than those who are in privileged positions (Hutmacher et al., 2001:99). In this regard, for the education system in Namibia to treat all learners equally and provide them with equal education opportunities, schools in rural areas must be given special attention in terms of resources, to place them on an equal footing with urban schools. The system of equal distribution of resources to schools in Namibia, without reasonable attention to schools in rural areas, will not reduce the existing inequality of access to quality education because schools in urban areas already have more resources than schools in rural areas. The system of equal distribution of resources benefits urban schools more than rural schools. The needs of rural schools must be considered first, in order to equalise their resource availability with urban schools. By doing so, it can relieve the burden that rural schools have been carrying since the colonial eras, and would restore their courage and self-confidence, which they lost due to marginalisation. If the government does not consider the educational needs of the rural children, these children will feel neglected and isolated in their own country. At the same time, these children will not feel like full citizens of a country, which does not fully acknowledge their distinctive rights (Kymlicka & Norman 2000:18). That experience, in the long run, will demoralise their commitments to fulfil their citizenship duties. The main point here is that, the historical background of the Namibian education system should be considered, specifically in terms of resource distribution, in order to rectify the inequality of the past.

The absence of equity has been eroded quality in Namibia primary education. In fact, quality education refers to an equitable state within the school or classroom (education system) that advances equality of learning for all learners (Hailombe, 2011:34). However, quality education can only be realised if the classroom environment is conducive to learning, with no barriers that hinder smooth teaching and learning processes, such as the absence of adequate teaching and learning materials. The absence of adequate teaching and learning resources in rural schools is hindering the realisation of quality education. Disappointingly, the analysed ICT policy for education indicates that schools that do not have electricity and telecommunication facilities, do not qualify to receive ICT equipment (MoE, 2005:9). Many schools in rural areas do not have electricity and telecommunication equipment. It is clear that schools that do not have ICT equipment, are not in a position to provide quality education in this field. These schools are lacking the information, which they are supposed to get from the use of technology.

These days, knowledge depends on the world of the internet, which could only be reached by the use of technology, which is out of reach for learners at rural schools. Similarly, the shortage of textbooks, libraries and laboratories at rural schools is a barrier to learners' education. The level of learning by rural learners will not compare well with those in urban areas. Rural learners may pass exams, and yet their knowledge and understanding may be limited. Passing examinations, does not mean quality education, but simply meeting minimum requirements. The limitation of knowledge and understanding will be an obstacle in their tertiary education, which might discourage them from pursuing their goals in education. On the same note, learners that receive education of poor quality, have limited chances in the job market, due to their limited knowledge. Moreover, learners with limited knowledge are likely to lack self-confidence and are unable to look at education as a lifelong process. In that view, the TEA, ETSIP, ICT and Strategic Plan 2012–2017 policies have failed to provide equitable access to quality education.

### **5.3 How the Namibian primary education policies promote social development**

All the analysed policies (TEA, ETSIP, ICT and the Strategic Plan 2012–2017) emphasis on producing responsible and productive future citizens who can contribute to social cohesion, political stability and economic growth of society (GRN, 2007:1; MoBEC, 1993:31; MoE, 2005:1; 2012:1), which are the objectives of DCE. As stated in Chapter 2, in democratic society, schools should equip future citizens with knowledge and understanding of political systems and economic values. Schools should also develop learners' critical thinking capacity for them to become effective future citizens (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:35) as the social, political and economic

wellbeing of a society cannot be realised in the absence of good people, who are well prepared to participate in and contribute to the development of the community. On the same note, Kymlicka and Norman (2000:6) stress that the health and stability of a democratic society do not depend on the justice of its government only, but also on the qualities and attitudes of its citizens. Some of the qualities and attitudes necessary for democracy are the ability to tolerate others and to work with those who are different from themselves, the willingness to participate in political and economic matters, and the ability to hold those in offices accountable (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:6). It is the responsibility of the education system to provide learners with knowledge, skills, attitudes and moral values necessary for personal development, which will make them function properly and which will enable them to relate to themselves and to others on the basis of the principles of democracy and justice. Callan (1997:76, 79) argues for learners to be initiated into a sense of justice according to which they accept the responsibility for the rights of others, what it is to care about others as partners, and to restrain themselves from violating others' rights. It is for this reason that Namibian primary education policies put emphasis on the education system to support and protect democracy by helping learners to understand the rights and obligations of citizenship, and to develop skills that will enable them to be active, imaginative and responsible participants in democratic societies (GRN, 2007:2; MoBEC, 1993:47; MoE, 2012:5). The individual's rights to citizenship are those stated by Waghid (2004:31) as to enjoy equal rights, personal security, and freedom of speech, as well as the right to vote. The same individual is obligated to uphold the rule of law and should refrain from any kind of threat that could interfere with others' enjoyment of their rights. In that respect, Namibian primary education policies ensure that primary education should not only encourage learners to master basic reading, writing and numeracy but also to learn about citizenship in a democratic society whereby they respect others' culture and values (MoBEC, 1993:28; MoE, 2012:8)). On the same note, Namibian primary education policies command for learners to study how democratic societies operate as well as the obligations and rights of their citizens (MoBEC, 1993:29).

The TEA, ETSIP, ICT and the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 policies theoretically manifest sound and applaudable citizenship and democracy values. However, there is a dilemma in the practical situation. There is no indication of how these values are to be achieved or of any procedure to follow. One example is that Namibian primary education policies theoretically promise to provide reasonable teaching and learning facilities to primary education throughout of the country in order to fulfil its constitutional mandate (GRN, 2007:19; MoBEC, 1993:3) but there is no clear directive on how the facilities are going to be distributed. These policies respond to the call of the Namibian

Constitution, in which article 20 declares quality education for all Namibians. At the same time, the Namibian Constitution obligates the government to provide the required facilities to primary schools in order to render that right of quality education effectively to every Namibian (MoBEC, 1993:3). However, the TEA, ETSIP, ICT and the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 policies have not yet met their promises. As a result, only learners in urban schools are privileged with quality education due to the availability of teaching and learning resources. Learners in rural schools are denied their rights of quality education. The difference in levels of education draws a line between learners in rural and urban areas, which undoubtedly could create differences in their economic and social lives later. As a result, these learners (rural and urban learners) might hardly live together peacefully if one group believes they had not been given equal treatment (Gyekye, 1997:91). The unequal opportunity to quality education therefore cripples critical citizenship and marginalises those who are not able to acquire or access quality education.

In addition, Namibian primary education policies promise to contribute to the acceleration of economic growth and equitable social development to create opportunities for employment and eradicate poverty (GRN, 2007:1; MoBEC, 1993:42; MoE, 2012:1) but there is not an implementation mechanism in place to achieve the objectives. In true sense, equitable social development and economic growth cannot be experienced in the face of unequal opportunity to quality education. This is because those who receive education of poor quality are not in good position of competing in the job market with those who receive education of good quality due to the limited knowledge and skills of the former. As a result of their limited knowledge and understanding, those who receive education of poor quality will occupy positions where they earn lower salaries or wages compared to those who had gained advanced knowledge and understanding as a benefit of their good education. In most cases, learners who receive education of poor quality at early ages are likely to be discouraged to take education seriously, which leads them to leave school before secondary grades, therefore being unable to attend tertiary education. Galston (1995, cited in Callan, 1997:189) echoes this notion by saying: “Children need to be equipped with the capabilities to live more than the one way of life, which their parents would prescribe; otherwise, these children will lack a meaningful right to exist, should the prescribed path turn out to be unfulfilling”. In other words, education needs to be far more meaningful, challenging and interesting to the learners than they expect, and should equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills that will enable them to be competitive in their everyday life. Otherwise, they will not see the reason of attending school. In addition, the unequal opportunity to quality education promotes economic inequality in society. Economic inequalities result in a reducing of individuals’ freedom, which is an important element

of democracy, and consequently makes it difficult for these people to exercise their social and political rights (Gyekye, 1997:142). Political equality is a goal of democracy, but cannot be achieved in the face of economic and social inequalities. As such, the TEA, ETSIP, ICT and the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 have demonstrated weak DCE.

#### **5.4 How Namibian primary education policies promote democratic participation**

The TEA, ETSIP, ICT and the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 were developed through workshops, forums, seminars on education, and from intensive and broad individual consultative processes, which included various participants, such as –

- staff members of the Ministry of Education at national and regional level;
- representatives from other ministries;
- government departments;
- universities and staff;
- teachers' unions;
- student organisations;
- political parties;
- private enterprises;
- non-governmental organisations;
- international development partners; and
- individual consultants (GRN, 2007:ii; MoBEC, 1993:17; MoE, 2005:3; 2012:2).

Despite the fact that the TEA, ETSIP, ICT and the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 policies provided a space for democratic participation to the participants, it is not clear how ordinary citizens were involved in the development of these policies. The TEA, ETSIP, ICT and the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 policies did not provide enough space for all citizens to participate in discussions and to contribute to the development of these policies. The voices of the masses – such as the poor, labourers, uneducated and all citizens at grass root level – were not heard. This exclusion of the masses in the development of the country is not in line with the conceptions of DCE, as alluded to in Chapter 2.

From a DCE perspective, all citizens – regardless of social, political or economic status – should be treated with equal respect and should have equal rights to contribute the development of the country. The development of the Namibian education policies are supposed to be brought to the

public for deliberation, where everyone could have an opportunity to consider and justify their reasons in public, with the aim of validating the law under which they must live. In case of representations, the representatives are required to solicit views from the citizens who are affected by the results of the policies (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:22). On the same note, representatives are expected to present their reasons to citizens for public scrutiny and criticism in order to reach common understanding, which promotes mutual respect among free and equal citizens (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:3). The involvement of all stakeholders in the decision-making processes produce better, more inclusive decisions that might lead to the formulation of the plan, which could attend to the needs and expectations of the public, than the ones reached by representatives acting alone (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:8). The case of excluding ordinary citizens from decision-making processes regards them (ordinary citizens) as passive subjects of legislation to be ruled, when they are supposed to be autonomous agents who can participate directly or through their representatives in decision-making and govern their own society (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:3).

Apart from teachers' representative unions, it seems that teachers did not participate in the discussion concerning the formation of the TEA, ETSIP, ICT and the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 policies. My point here is that representatives and political officials cannot rightly claim that they know which favourable policies are right for their fellow citizens, so they need to solicit views from citizens who are affected by the results of the policies (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:22). This should be done because, when policies are formulated without the active participation of all members who are affected by the results of those policies, they are likely to be incomplete in many ways (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:124). More importantly, teachers – who are the implementers of the policies – are supposed to be active participants in the formulation of the policies and should be allowed to voice problems they encountered from practical experience. At the same time, teachers could identify possible challenges to the implementation of the policy. The participation approach used in the formulation of the TEA, ETSIP, ICT and the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 policies has demonstrated that teachers in Namibia are however, not considered as trustworthy to contribute to the development of the education policies. Instead, they are regarded as merely workers who implement what policy designers instruct them to do. This situation might make it difficult for teachers to take ownership of the policies and to implement these policies successfully. Teachers' participation in policy development could help them to have a broader understanding of the objectives of the policies, which would contribute to the quality and success of the activities and lessons they plan towards the achievement of the objectives of the policies.



Even though student organisations took part in the development of the Namibian education policies (GRN, 2007:ii; MoBEC, 1993:17; MoE, 2012:2), there is no clear evidence on how the voice of learners was heard. The formulations of the TEA, ETSIP, ICT and the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 policies did not invite learners' contributions to the discussion concerning their learning. If learners could be given an opportunity to speak their minds, they might reveal the deep moral tensions of the society from where they come (Callan, 1997:206), which could guide policy objectives aimed at addressing problems that the learners are facing in society. In addition, for learners to become active and free citizens, they need to be introduced to knowledge and skills needed for democratic deliberation, and engage in discussions on various platforms and levels. In so doing, the education system would develop the capacity of learners to understand different views and share their understanding with other people in a deliberative process of moral arguments with a view towards mutually justifiable decisions (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:61). However, the Ministry of Education failed to demonstrate democracy in terms of teachers and learners, even though it expected these teachers to teach learners about democratic citizenship by practicing it and by making them understand that democracy means more than voting. In fact, if the ideology of democratic citizenship is to be implemented effectively, these policies need to be put into clear effect so that citizens under these policies could demonstrate them through positive action. This will provide learners with a strong example of how a democratic citizenry should conduct itself.

Despite the fact that the participants in the formation of the TEA, ETSIP, ICT and the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 policies participated in democratic decision-making, they did not have a space for deliberative democracy. I am arguing for democratic deliberation because it encourages participants to learn from one another, it enables them to recognise their individual and collective misunderstandings and to develop new understanding and knowledge that might lead to the development of successful policies (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:157). Through democratic deliberation, participants establish an understanding of both themselves and the political community to which they belong (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:65). This way, they can make sound decisions and develop responsible policies. More importantly, decisions that are reached through democratic deliberation where everyone was listened to, has greater legitimacy than decisions from any other method of decision-making (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:129). At the same time, deliberative democracy helps participants to develop the virtues of citizenship for which the Namibian government is striving, and encourages citizens to consider political issues in a public-spirited mode (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:30). As such, the exclusion of the voices of ordinary citizens in the



formation of the TEA, ETSIP, ICT and the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 policies weakened the capacity of these policies to promote DCE in the country.

## **5.5 Summary of the chapter**

The chapter evaluated the extent to which the education system in Namibia was informed by values of DCE, such as access, quality, equity and democracy. The evaluation was done in relation with the analysis that was reported in Chapter 4. The analysis was conducted in order to determine whether the TEA, ETSIP, ICT and Strategic Plan 2012–2017 policies contribute to the promotion of DCE in Namibia by exploring the level of access, quality, equity and democracy, which form the basis of DCE, as alluded to in Chapter 2. Therefore, the level of DCE principles was measured through the discussion under sub-topics, such as how the Namibia primary education policies promote equitable access to quality education, social development and how to promote democratic participation in the country.

However, the analysed policies indicate that the MoE has made efforts to promote DCE since the independence of the country. Therefore, it is commendable that the government, through the MoE, has increased access to education opportunities by building schools countrywide. Thus, the goal of access has been achieved. Even though the goal of access to education opportunities has been met, equity has not been considered, which overshadows all other principles of DCE. This is because the analysed policies have not made a significant attempt to attend to the needs of disadvantaged schools. The historical background of the Namibian education system indicates that during the colonial eras (German and South Africa colonial eras), schools in urban areas were privileged in terms of teaching and learning resources, compared to those in rural areas. Therefore, the policies that were studied in this study show that the government, after independence of the country, has not made an effort to address inequality in teaching and learning facilities, which were inherited from the colonial education system. As a result, schools in rural areas are still disadvantaged, and are not able to provide quality education.

Moreover, the analysed policies revealed that the development of these policies did not invite the participation of all stakeholders. Only representatives from different ministries and unions, political parties, international development partners and individual consultants participated in the development of these policies. Ordinary citizens, parents, teachers and learners did not take part in the development of the policies. In the same vein, participants in the development of these policies did not get an opportunity to engage in democratic deliberation. Therefore, it was noted that the

exclusion of some stakeholders from the development process of the policies led to the failure of these policies to attend to the needs and expectations of all stakeholders.

## Chapter 6: How the Namibian education system links to the African philosophy of *Ubuntu*

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores to what extent the Namibian education system links to *ubuntu* as an African philosophy of education. *Ubuntu* is regarded as a cultural code of ethics for Africans, which guides their interactions with each other (Meyer, Moore & Viljoen, 2008:544). Therefore, it is important for Namibian education to introduce learners to their culture, which is *ubuntu* values, at an early age. Culture shapes an individual's character and therefore, influences positive behaviours, which are acceptable in society. The values of *ubuntu* lead individuals to be committed to contribute to social cohesion and to take part positively in the development of society. Therefore, this chapter firstly provides an overview of the philosophy of *ubuntu* as an African culture, and thereafter, the discussion will focus on the importance of *ubuntu* philosophy in African education. Furthermore, the chapter investigates how the Namibian education system integrates the philosophy of *ubuntu*, and finally, the discussion focuses on the connection between *ubuntu* and DCE.

### 6.2 The overview of *ubuntu* philosophy

The concept of *ubuntu* does not have only one meaning. Thus, it means different things to different people regarding to the value they attach to it. Gade (2011:303) accumulated meanings of *ubuntu* from different narrators, as listed below:

- goodness of nature;
- good moral disposition;
- greatness of soul;
- a human quality;
- a quality connected to a particular group;
- an excellent African quality; and
- a quality that black people possess.

According to Broodryk (2010:47), the word *ubuntu* means humanness. The idea of humanness is based on the reason that a person is a person through another person. On the same note, Ramose (2014:121), also argues that the *ubuntu* philosophy is a composition of Bantu-speaking people's experience, from the past, in the present and in the future. In other words, *Ubuntu* is regarded as part of African culture. Therefore, in this discussion, the concept of *ubuntu* and African culture are used interchangeably.

African culture is centred on humanness. That essentially means a human being depends on other people. Drawing from this principle, Africans understand that a person only becomes truly human in relationship with others (Gade, 2011:313). In this respect, Africans believe that a person has the right to rely on others for support, survival and success (Broodryk, 2006:132). Gyekye (1997:39) shares the same sentiment by noting that, from African cultural perspectives, an individual cannot develop and achieve their full potential without the relationships with other people. Similarly, Meyer et al. (2008:547) stress that an individual can only become conscious of himself, his duties, his privileges and finally his responsibilities towards himself and to others, through his relationships with other people. They further explain that to be human, is to be connected to the whole community through full participation in community events, such as ceremonies, rituals and festivals (Meyer et al., 2008:542). Therefore, members of the community are expected to show concern for the well-being of others, and to strive to enhance the common good (Gyekye, 1997:42). This is because Africans believe in cooperation, rather than individual competition and self-enrichment (Ramose, 2014:147). It is for this reason that Africans respect the rights of human beings. In this regard, they believe that the right to be a human being is inherent to every person, which sets all people on an equal footing (Ramose, 2014:121). For Ramose, the term “right” includes the fundamental right to life, such as the right to development as well as the right to a healthy, nurturing and stable living environment. From African cultural perspectives, the human dignity of the Bantu-speaking people demands recognition, protection, promotion and respect of all people equally (Ramose, 2014:121).

Moreover, African culture takes democratic deliberation as the best medium of decision-making processes, despite the fact that it takes a long time to reach consensus, as compared to other decision-making processes. Gyekye (1997:118) explains how lengthily African discussions can be, by stating that African discussions never settle until everyone had an opportunity to contribute to the discussion. In this respect, Africans believe that a long meeting that involves in-depth discussion produces well-scrutinised resolutions as opposed to those which are short and impersonal (Broodryk, 2010:130). Although long meetings are often time consuming, they provide an opportunity for participants to exchange ideas with the intention of reaching productive consensus (Gyekye, 1997:130). Furthermore, as is the case with the western meeting style, the consensus should always be accompanied by justifications, which are acceptable to the practice of democracy in traditional African political systems. Nevertheless, although in some cases the consensus might not result in total agreement, it leaves every participant in the decision-making process feeling satisfied, rather than uncertain (Gyekye, 1997:130). It is important to note that,

during deliberation processes, everyone is expected to speak their mind and strive to promote patience and mutual tolerance, whilst also being ready to compromise. At the same time, participants should be able to abandon or modify their arguments in the face of more persuasive arguments put forward by others (Gyekye, 1997:130). Bearing this in mind, democratic deliberation in African culture allows everyone to participate in decision-making. Even ordinary youths can give opinions or make suggestions, which will receive equal consideration with those of their elders (Gyekye, 1997:127). In addition, Africans have a habit of inspiring others to speak and express themselves in detail, for the reason of sharing experiences (Broodryk, 2006:131). Sharing experiences creates a feeling of togetherness, which in turn, establishes a spirit of unity and commonality between people. Therefore, African democratic deliberation emphasises the importance of consensus and prioritises the well-being of the community as a whole, because in African culture, the individual is less important than the community (Broodryk, 2010:49).

African culture is based on traditional values, which they use as a means to defend, manage and build their personal lives, as well as influence and protect the lives of others (Broodryk, 2006: 27). These values, otherwise known as *ubuntu* values, are divided into two categories, namely primary and secondary values. Below, primary values are discussed in relation to their secondary values.

- Humanness, which is understood to be comprised of tolerance, understanding, peace, helpfulness, warmth, and humanity, is regarded as the main components of *ubuntu*. The person, as a human being, is expected to treat all people equally, by understanding their problems, as well as by being tolerant to opposing points of view, in the spirit of respect and democracy. At the same time, the quality of humanness of a person also requires the person to treat animals and the surrounding environment with respect (Broodryk, 2006:32–33).
- Caring includes empathy, sympathy and a charitable orientation, which essentially requires people to place high importance on other people's problems and interests, regardless of their social and economic status, in a loving, empathic and sympathetic spirit (Broodryk, 2006:44).
- Sharing is related to both unconditional giving as well as the redistribution of resources to those who are in need. In this respect, it is expected that a person who is blessed with abundant resources and more capabilities than others, should share these with less privileged people, because allowing a person to starve, while being able to provide support and assistance, is observed by others with disappointment (Broodryk, 2006:56).
- Respect is associated with commitment, human dignity, obedience, order and social norms, which should be practiced by all and granted to all members of the community, regardless of

their educational background and economic status. For example, the highly educated people and illiterates should be treated and given equal respect, irrespective of their differences in social status. Similarly, labourers are understood equally to deserve the degree of respect given to professionals (Broodryk, 2006:64).

- Compassion includes the social cohesion, love, forgiveness and spontaneity that result when one makes an attempt to reach out to others and shares emotive feelings with them. These may include rejoicing heartily or feeling the suffering of others in order to understand their sorrow or problems (Broodryk, 2006:77–78). Therefore, by considering these characteristics, it is understood that compassion integrates and binds people together, which leads them to work as a team towards a common societal goal.

Thus, it can be seen that the values of *ubuntu* manifest themselves through the interactions of people and the good things that people do for each other and for the community.

### **6.3 The importance of *ubuntu* philosophy in African education**

According to Broodryk (2006:xv), *ubuntu* philosophy explains how Africans cope with life through genuine behaviour as well as a happy approach to life. This attitude, they argue, promotes the common good of society due to the fact that it includes humanness, which is an important element of human growth (Gade, 2011:317). Therefore, it is important for African education to be based on the *ubuntu* philosophy in order to create a moral African order, which is manifested in the establishment of a more humanised African society, as well as caring, happy and disciplined individuals (Broodryk, 2006:3). It is for this reason that African education needs to inculcate *ubuntu* values in learners at early ages. This is necessary due to the fact that cultural values produce features of personality and social character that learners need to become good and responsible citizens. According to Cushner, McClelland and Safford (1992:22), culture (such as *ubuntu* values) guides a person's thinking, vision and behaviour which enables him or her to live a healthier and more productive life than would otherwise be the case. Taking this into consideration, Assié-Lumumba (2006:53) identifies seven functions of culture:

- culture works as a lens of perceptions and cognition for individuals;
- it motivates human behaviours;
- a person uses culture as a criterion for evaluation;
- an individual uses culture as a basis of identification;
- it is a shared mode of communication, of which language is the most elaborative system;
- culture is a basis of classification;

- it is a system of production and consumption.

Since African countries were colonised by Westerners, the colonial powers reshaped African education and based it on Western culture. It is for this reason that Assié-Lumumba (2006:130) urges for education in Africa to be reconnected to Africa's culture and takes the philosophy of *ubuntu* as the foundation. The philosophy of *ubuntu* shapes African education in order to promote the collective well-being of all African people. In addition, Assié-Lumumba believes that if African education continues to perpetuate Western culture, it will not be able to respond to address African problems. This is because culture can potentially be used as a weapon to defend, manage and build the personal lives of African people, as well as to assist them to solve their problems. For example, the selflessness of Africans which is originated in their togetherness, strengthens individuals and provides the essential security that can resist anxiety and tension (Meyer et al., 2008:553). On the same note, Africans use music, dance and rhythm as mechanisms of attaining a fulfilled life, due to the fact that these activities play an important role as psychological healing instruments (Meyer et al., 2008:554). On a different note, Ramose (2014:124) reveals that African education can also use African culture and its values as a tool of liberation and as a counter to knowledge to fight against a negative legacy of Western imperial cultural values that are still dominant in African schools. The perpetuated inequality in resource distribution that is experienced in the Namibian education policies today, is one of the negative influences from previous Western education policies that need to be replaced with education policies that accommodate *ubuntu* values. Dawes (1998, cited in Meyer, et al., 2008:537) explains that the psychology in the United States and South Africa lacks the understanding of living conditions of black and poor people, and as a result, it is less relevant to their problems they face. It is for this reason that Ramose (2014:128) urges for students of medicine in Africa to study the human person in their tradition in order to be able to attend to African patients with a full understanding of African tradition. For Ramose, it is not enough for an African student of medicine to acquire technical knowledge from the West, which might be not responsive to African sickness. This is because, in some cases, the causes of sicknesses in Africa are different from those of Westerners. For example, in Africa, a person could be sick as a result of dissatisfaction of ancestors tormenting him or her (Ramose, 2014:128), which could not be the case in West. Therefore, it is important to acquire knowledge from both the Westerners and African tradition.

Moreover, Cushner et al. (1992:603) urge Africans to realise that the philosophy of imitation and servile behaviour towards Western practice, specifically in education, is a sign of a lack of confidence in themselves, and proves their inferiority. Furthermore, in agreement with Ramose,

they emphasise the need for Africans to liberate their institutional education policies from Western cultural influences to promote their African culture. This is because the promotion of African culture leads to the foundation of a dynamic and consistent socio-political philosophy for modern Africa (Cushner et al., 1992:60). At the same time, African culture is needed for ensuring social cohesion and moral purity. Samkanges (1980, cited in Gade, 2011:320) understand that there is a need for Zimbabwe (in this case Africa) to return to African culture, which was lost during the period of colonial oppression, in order to create a good future society. This is necessary due to the fact that the revival of African cultural heritage will lead to a mental liberation of Africans and contribute to national integration and to nation building (Gyekye, 1997:234–235). Therefore, African culture should be the foundation of development in modern Africa, and modernisation should be built on Africans' cultural traditions. As such, the resource of traditions should be harnessed to the modern goals, methods and processes of development (Gyekye, 1997:234). This means that African education should be based on cultural traditions and harmonised with modernised goals and objectives of development, in order to make Africa a better and happier place for all in which to live.

#### **6.4 How the Namibian education system currently integrates *ubuntu* philosophy**

This section explores the Namibian education system regarding how it integrates the African philosophy of *ubuntu*. This is done in relation to the findings from the policies discussed in Chapter 4 of this study. The policies (TEA, ETSIP, ITC and Strategic Plan 2012–2017) reveal that the decisions regarding the development of those policies were done by the representatives from different ministries, teachers' and student unions, political parties, and international agents, as well as individual consultants, during workshops, education seminars and individual consultant meetings. The participants did not get an opportunity for democratic deliberation. Therefore, the participants were not at a position to present their ideas and concerns to others in such a way that others can listen to them attentively with the intention of asking for clarifications in order to reach a collective agreement. As such, the Namibian education system does not fully integrate the philosophy of *ubuntu*, due to the fact that it does not consider democratic deliberation, which is essential to *ubuntu* principles of discussion. Moreover, the Namibia education system is not creating a space for the citizens to exercise and increase their tolerance, patience and listening skills, which they could apply during democratic deliberation. Democratic deliberation allows participants to listen attentively to others who have different opinions and tolerate their differences in the spirit of cooperation and democracy. Therefore, the Namibian learners need to be orientated



towards the values of *ubuntu*, particularly tolerance, in order to be able to associate with others from different cultural backgrounds, beliefs and conventions. In so doing, they become united and evoke a spirit of teamwork.

Apart from neglecting democratic deliberation, the Namibian education system disregards the *ubuntu* value of respect, which demands all people to be respected regardless of their education background or economic status. For example, from an *ubuntu* perspective, illiterate people, labourers and ordinary citizens should be treated and given equal respect as those who are highly educated, as well as professionals. On the contrary, the Namibian education system does not respect to illiterate people, labourers and ordinary citizens, as these people are not considered to be worthy enough to be included in decision-making processes regarding the development of the country. This is manifested in the policies discussed in Chapter 4, that illiterate people, labourers, and ordinary citizens were excluded from the decision-making processes regarding the development of those policies (TEA, ETSIP, ICT and Strategic Plan 2012–2017). To recapitulate, only the representatives from different ministries, teachers' and student unions, political parties, and international agents, as well as individual consultants, were granted respect to make decisions on behalf of the masses, and participated in the development of the policies. In that regard, the Namibian education system has failed to embrace the *ubuntu* value of respect, which need to be considered as an important element in the Namibian education system in particular, as well as in African education in general.

Moreover, the policies ignore the values of sharing and redistribution of *ubuntu* philosophy, due to the fact that schools in urban areas have more teaching and learning materials, including ICT facilities, compared to schools in rural areas. As a result, learners in rural areas receive poor quality education due to the lack of teaching and learning facilities, while learners in urban areas receive quality education as a result of the availability of teaching and learning equipment. This situation is clearly contrary to *ubuntu* values of sharing and redistribution. In respect of the *ubuntu* values of sharing and redistribution, one person is not allowed to eat, while another one goes hungry. It is for this reason that all people should receive equal benefits from public goods and anyone who has more resources than others, should share these extra resources with the underprivileged, The Namibian education system neglects these values.

On the same note, the fundamental rights to life, such as the right to development, as well as a liveable environment for learners in rural areas, are violated in such a way that they are unable to participate in activities that require the development of technological skills due to the absence of teaching and learning facilities, specifically ICT equipment. At the same time, the lack of

textbooks, chairs, desks, laboratories, and libraries, results in schools becoming places, which are not conducive to teaching and learning. As such, Namibian education needs to consider and restore the rights of the learners in rural areas by attending to their needs, specifically the provision of adequate teaching and learning resources, for *ubuntu* values to be fulfilled.

## 6.5 Links between ubuntu and DCE

In Chapter 2, the theoretical framework of this study was drawn from both Western theorists and African theorists' perceptions of DCE. In this section, I am going to discuss how the African perspective of DCE (African democratic citizenship education) links to the Western concept of DCE (Western democratic citizenship education). To draw a line between the two conceptions in this section, I use DCE to represent Western DCE and *ubuntu* to represent African perspective of DCE. Throughout this study, I have argued for the Namibian education system to promote DCE in the country, and at the same time, to introduce learners to the values of *ubuntu*. As stated earlier in this chapter (see 5.1), *ubuntu* is an African philosophy, which describes a traditional African form of socialisation. In other words, *ubuntu* is regarded as a cultural code of ethics for Africans, which guides their interactions with each other. For its traditional and cultural origins, some African philosophers, such as Assié-Lumumba (2006), Gyekye (1997) and others, argue for African education to be reconnected to the *ubuntu* philosophy, which is capable of creating a good African society in the future. It is for this reason that I have come to believe that to integrate DCE with *ubuntu* values will help the Namibian education system to produce effective, responsible and productive future Namibian citizens.

*Ubuntu* and DCE share similar features, which focus on the promotion of social cohesion, political stability and economic growth. Some of these features are kindness, generosity, compassion, peace, harmony, solidarity, mutual reciprocities, freedom, dignity, respect, security, sympathy, tolerance, social justice and concern for others. These features are centred on unifying citizens and creating a democratic environment where everyone strives to maintain peace, respect individualities and accept differences, and pay proper attention to the interests, wishes and opinions of others for common good. At the same time, the individual is cautious to avoid harm, do justice and provide some basis for improving the conditions of everyone's life. If the Namibian learners are introduced to these characteristics, it is inevitable that they will become future citizens of good character, who will be trustworthy and who will contribute to the wellbeing of society.

However, the *ubuntu* values of sharing, caring, compassion, respect and concern for others go beyond that of DCE. This is because *ubuntu* requires that everyone should make an attempt to reach out to others and share their wealth in order to improve the lives of others. Africans understand that everyone has a talent, which might differ from others, which they need to share for a better life. Some have more material resources than others, while some have more knowledge and understanding of certain aspects, which they need to share in a spirit of cooperation as human beings (Broodryk, 2010:127). In this respect, it is expected that a person who is blessed with abundant resources and more capabilities than others, should share these with less privileged people, because allowing a person to starve, while being able to provide support and assistance, is observed by others with disappointment (Broodryk, 2006:56). For the same reason, the Senegalese use the word *teranga*, which means “[y]our pain is my pain; my wealth is your wealth; and your salvation is my salvation” (Akinola & Uzodike, 2018:95). Ramose (2014:125) shares the same sentiment, namely that it is an obligation for an African to share his or her wealth with the rest of the community.

Apart from sharing, caring, compassion and respect for values, *ubuntu* is centred on humanness. Humanness simply means a person only becomes truly human in relationship with others (Gade, 2011:313). In this respect, Africans believe that a person has the right to rely on others for support, survival and success (Broodryk, 2006:132). This is because, from African cultural perspectives, an individual cannot develop and achieve his or her full potential without relationships with other people (Gyekye, 1997:39). Therefore, it is expected of an individual to see other human beings as him- or herself and to treat them with respect. For the same reason, Africans have a proverb, which says, “I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am” (Graybill, 2004, cited in Akinola & Uzodike, 2018:95).

Moreover, *ubuntu* takes deliberative democracy as the most favourable medium of decision-making but decisions are taken by consensus. This decision-making process takes a long time to reach agreement, as compared to deliberative democracy of DCE as discussed in Chapter 2. The length of the African decision-making process is determined by the number of the participants. Gyekye (1997:118) explains how lengthy African discussions can be, by stating that African discussions never settle until everyone had an opportunity to contribute to the discussion. However, *ubuntu* deliberative democracy appears more appropriate to the Namibian context, because it is inclusive in nature and reduces domination in decision-making processes. Namibians experienced a life of apartheid, domination and submission during colonial eras, which could have influenced their lives

negatively and prevented them from active participation. On the same note, long time ago, African traditional structures emphasised the domination and subordination of children. Children must always learn from elders, and there was very little of value that elders can learn from children (Tabulawa, 2013:100). However, with the coming of democracy, modern African culture has embraced democracy, which allows elders to value ideas from children. Considering the Namibian historical background, cultural practice and upbringing, which may reduce the Namibian citizens' capacity to engage actively in discussions, *ubuntu* deliberative democracy is more appropriate to the Namibians' situation than DCE deliberative democracy. This is because *ubuntu* deliberative democracy goes beyond low self-esteem and passiveness, and encourages every participant to contribute to the discussion in order to reach a productive consensus. Nevertheless, although the consensus might not result in total agreement in some cases, it leaves every participant in the decision-making process feeling satisfied rather than uncertain (Gyekye, 1997:130). This is evidence that there is a link between *ubuntu* and DCE.

## 6.6 Summary of the chapter

The chapter discussed the meaning of the philosophy of *ubuntu*. It was indicated that the philosophy of *ubuntu* comprises African experiences (the past, present and the future), which leads it to be known as an African culture. From African cultural perspectives, a human being depends on the contributions and assistance of other people for survival and success. Therefore, African people are expected to strive for and promote a spirit of compassion, love, and to care for the well-being of others. Moreover, this chapter discussed the importance of *ubuntu* philosophy in African education, which is to guide learners' behaviours and enable them to become responsible citizens. It was noted that *ubuntu* values integrate and bind people together, and enhance a spirit of cooperation and teamwork. It is for that reason that African education needs to be reconnected to *ubuntu* values in order to contribute to the social cohesion and make Africa a good place to be.

Furthermore, this chapter investigated how the Namibian education system fails to integrate the philosophy of *ubuntu*. It was noted that the Namibian education system neglects the *ubuntu* value of respect because it disregards the contributions of illiterate people, labourers and ordinary citizens to the development of the country. This is because these groups are not involved in the decision-making for the development of education policies. At the same time, the Namibian education system ignores the *ubuntu* values of sharing and redistribution, because urban schools have more teaching and learning materials than rural schools. The *ubuntu* values of sharing and redistribution require the individual who have more materials, to share those materials with the less privileged.

Furthermore, the chapter revealed that the Namibian education system does not consider democratic deliberation in decision-making processes, which is recommended by the philosophy of *ubuntu*. Lastly, the chapter discussed the connection between *ubuntu* and DCE.

This discussion leads to the next chapter, which comprises the summary of findings, recommendations and conclusion.

## **Chapter 7: Summary of the findings, recommendations and conclusion**

### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a synopsis of the research process, a summary of the main findings of the study and recommendations for the Namibian government, as well as for further research. To recapitulate, the study sought to understand whether the Namibian education policies that affect teaching and learning at primary level, contribute to the promotion of DCE in the country. Moreover, this study also aimed at identifying the hindrances of the promotion of DCE in Namibia. This was done through the analysis of significant education policies that include the Toward Education for All (TEA), Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP), Information and Communication Technology policy for Education (ICT) and Strategic Plan 2012–2017.

### **7.2 Synopsis of the research process**

This section summarises the way in which this study was undertaken. To recapitulate, the study explored the extent to which DCE is currently implemented in Namibian primary education, and identified challenges that delay the promotion of DCE in the country. At the same time, the study sought to understand the implications of DCE for teaching and learning. This was done through the analysis of major education policies that support teaching and learning in order to determine whether these policies have been contributing to the cultivation of DCE in Namibia primary education from 1993 to 2017. In this respect, the analysis employed the indicators of democracy such as access, equity, quality and democracy. The analysed policies include the TEA (1993), ETSIP (2007), ICT (2005) and the Strategic Plan 2012–2017 (2012).

Chapter 1 of this study explained that during the colonial era, the Namibian people were not provided with equal opportunities for education, or to educational resources. The history of the Namibian education system reveals that urban schools were provided with adequate teaching and learning materials, but not rural schools. It is for this reason that after the independence of Namibia, the democratic government of the Republic of Namibia is now making efforts to implement education policies to provide equitable access to quality education for all and to strengthen democracy in the country. However, even though the government has claimed that it has promoted DCE in the country for twenty-eight years, DCE has remained underdeveloped, due to unequal opportunities for quality education. The problem of unequal opportunity for quality education in Namibia is the main area of enquiry of this study.

As has been demonstrated earlier in this study, the unequal distribution of teaching and learning resources between schools in rural and urban areas leads to differences in quality of education. As a result, learners in rural schools receive poor quality education due to a lack of teaching and learning resources, while learners in urban areas are provided with the best quality education as a result of the availability of teaching and learning facilities. It was for this reason that this study sought to understand the meaning of DCE in the Namibian context through policy analysis, in order to determine the shortcomings in those policies that delay the promotion of DCE.

In order to address the above mentioned problem, the study posed the following primary research question: Do the education policies that support teaching and learning in primary schools in Namibia promote DCE in the country? The primary question was investigated with the support of the following sub-questions:

- Do the Namibian primary education policies explicitly articulate DCE, which enable learners to develop emancipatory abilities to be active and responsible citizens in the future?
- What are the challenges that hinder the successful implementation of DCE in Namibia?
- What policy changes are necessary in teaching and learning to promote DCE in Namibia?

Chapter 2 established the theoretical framework of this study. The theoretical framework was drawn from the work of Western education philosophers such as Gutmann and Thompson (2004), Kymlicka and Norman (2000), and Callan (1997), as well as African philosophers like Assié-Lumumba (2006) and Gyekye (1997). This was used to examine, analyse and clarify the meaning of DCE. All the above-mentioned theorists regard the deliberative democracy model as being synonymous with DCE. They emphasise that deliberative democracy provides a basis of democracy that guides moral discussion in political life and assists in producing decisions, which are effective in dealing with inequality and social injustice in societies. Hence, deliberative democracy is an appropriate approach to deal with inequality in education resources, which are currently experienced in Namibian primary schools.

As was discussed in Chapter 3, the philosophy of education was applied in this study as an approach. The philosophy of education focuses on the analysis of concepts that are specific to education, and concentrates on the clarification of the meanings of educational concepts in order to establish a deep understanding of the way in which they are utilised regarding educational practices. Relating to this study, the philosophy of education was used to analyse and clarify the meaning of DCE in DCE theories, as well as in Namibian education policies. According to Jacobs (2012:9), philosophers of education address questions regarding education policy, human development, and curriculum theory. Therefore, philosophy of education guided this study to address the question of

the Namibian primary education policy to determine whether these policies contribute to the cultivation of DCE at primary education level.

The methodology of this study is interpretive theory. Since interpretive theory conveys the meanings of a literary text (Newton, 1986:3) and emphasises the process of understanding, it was used in this study, which sought to understand the meanings and explanations of DCE in DCE theories as well as in the Namibian education policies. Le Grange (2015:62) explains that interpretive research is founded on the understanding that there are multiple realities or truths, which need multiple methods for understanding them. It was for this reason that the interpretive paradigm invited conceptual analysis and deconstructive analysis as methods, in order to help in understanding the meanings of DCE. From Mukwambo et al.'s (2015:189) point of view, people attach more than one meaning to a concept. Therefore, it is important to specify exactly what meaning is used in the context in order to understand what is being said. Therefore, it was important to apply conceptual analysis in this study as a method, in order to specify the meaning of DCE and how it is used in different DCE theories, as well as to establish a clear understanding of the similarities and differences of the meanings of DCE in DCE theories and in the Namibian education policies. This helped to understanding the meaning of DCE in the Namibian context. For a complete understanding of DCE in the Namibian education policies, conceptual analysis was used together with deconstructive analysis. According to Waghid (2014:14) deconstructive analysis searches for meanings beyond the text, or meanings, which are not conventionally considered. In this study, deconstructive analysis was used as a method to draw out the meanings of DCE, which are missing in Namibian education policies, whilst also determining the way in which these misconceptions of DCE hinders the promotion of DCE. Since documents were the source of information for this study, document analysis was applied as another method. According to McCulloch (2004:7), documents are the most important means of communication through which we can get an understanding of how society has developed and how it is progressing as it does so. Therefore, documentary analysis helped to reveal the history of the Namibian education system, which led to an understanding of DCE in Namibia. The next section will provide the summary of the findings.

### **7.3 The summary of the findings**

The analysed education policies (TEA, ETSIP, ICT and Strategic Plan 2012–2017) reveal that the Namibian education system has not yet made a visible attempt to promote DCE in the country. This is because the analysed policies do not explicitly articulate DCE, which can enable learners to



develop emancipatory abilities and become active and responsible citizens. In this respect, the education system is supposed to play an emancipatory role among citizens and liberate them from any kind of oppression of the past, specifically people in rural areas who had been neglected by colonial governments.

The history of the Namibian education system, as was discussed in Chapter 4, shows that education during the colonial era was extremely limited for black Namibians, specifically those living in rural areas. In this regard, schools in urban areas, where white people lived, were provided with adequate education facilities, but not rural schools. It was for that reason that the MoE in the post-colonial era set four major goals that included access, equity, quality and democracy, in order to address the shortcomings in education. However, from the above-mentioned goals, only access has been achieved so far. It is noted with appreciation that the government has made it possible for every Namibian to have access to education by building schools countrywide. Nevertheless, the disparities in educational resources between rural schools and urban schools remain unchanged. It is unfortunate that the emphasis on improving equity in education has done little to close the gap in education resources and conditions between rural and urban schools. As a result, learners in rural areas are still receiving poor quality education because of the lack of education facilities, while learners in urban areas are provided with good quality education due to the availability of teaching and learning materials. In this regard, the Namibian education system disregards *ubuntu* values, such as that of sharing. As was discussed in Chapter 5 (see 5.2), the *ubuntu* value of sharing requires people to have equal resources, so that those with more resources share with those who have less, in order to avoid the marginalisation of some people in society. Furthermore, the education system in Namibia has not regarded the difference in quality of education as a matter of concern. As a result, the disparities in the quality of education lead to inequality in social, political and economic life, which is currently experienced in Namibia.

Another finding concerns the dilemma regarding a lack of inclusion of all citizens, including the poor, illiterate people and labourers, in discussions regarding the development of Namibian society. This is contradicting the values of democracy as well as of *ubuntu*. Democracy, including the values of *ubuntu*, demands that all people should be given respect and treated equally, irrespective of their educational background or their social, political and economic status. As was discussed in Chapter 4, democracy in Namibia is mostly exercised by educated people and professionals, who are given respect and power to make decisions concerning public issues, especially in policy formulations, whilst disregarding the contributions of the rest of the population. In that regard, the development of the TEA, ETSIP, ICT and Strategic Plan 2012–2017 provides a clear example

regarding the way in which the poor, uneducated and labourers were not consulted for their input. Only the representatives from different ministries, unions, political parties, international agents and individual consultants participated in decision-making processes. Considering this, the exclusion of the voices of the masses in the development of TEA, ETSIP, ICT and Strategic Plan 2012–2017 has made it impossible for these policies to address the problems and needs of the majority. This situation makes democracy in Namibia questionable.

In addition, the Namibian education system does not prepare citizens for democratic deliberation, which needs to be a medium of discussion in a democratic country like Namibia. For a country to promote democracy, it needs to engage citizens in discussions regarding public issues, and create a space for democratic deliberation whereby everyone is free to express their own ideas and justify their reasons in order to reach a collective agreement. This leads to the development of policies that are responsive to public needs and expectations. It is thus important to bear in mind that democratic deliberation enhances freedom of expression, openness, tolerance and patience among the citizens, which are the elements of democracy, as well as of *ubuntu*. This demonstrates that the Namibian education system has not made significant efforts to promote DCE in the country.

#### **7.4 Recommendations**

The recommendations of this study are directed to the Namibian government to ensure that education policies, specifically those affecting teaching and learning, contribute to the promotion of DCE in the country, by providing equitable access to quality education. In this regard, the Namibian government needs to attend to the imbalances in teaching and learning resources between rural and urban schools. One way to close the gap in the educational opportunities, such as lack of resources that is faced by rural schools in Namibia, is to develop redistribution policies that are comprised of compensatory programmes, which give these schools proportionately more resources in order to overcome the disadvantages they have been facing since the colonial education systems. As was discussed in Chapter 4 (see 4.3.3), redistribution of resources leads to an equitable education system, which develops quality education. It is important for the Namibian government to attend to the needs of the learners in rural areas, due to the fact that they might feel isolated, neglected and marginalised in their own country. Bearing this in mind, they might identify that as long as the government does not recognise their rights, their performances in citizenship duties and in social responsibilities as future citizens, will not be taken into consideration. In that regard, they will be demoralized, and not take part in the development of the country. For the promotion of DCE, teaching and learning processes should be a platform whereby teachers exercise DCE values, as

well as the values of *ubuntu*, and inculcate those values in learners in order to become democratic future citizens. According to Kymlicka and Norman (2000:10), the operation of a society does not depend only on the justice of its institutions or constitution, but also on the virtues, identities, and practices of its citizens. In that respect, school is regarded as the best place to prepare future citizens for citizenship duties through deliberative democracy, by inculcating citizenship virtues and democratic values in learners. Therefore, schools in Namibia should teach future citizens the knowledge and skills for democratic deliberation, in order to be able to take part in decision-making processes regarding the development of Namibian society.

Moreover, the education system in Namibia, needs to consider *ubuntu* philosophy, which is an African philosophy of education, as a foundation of its education. This is important, because *ubuntu* philosophy comprises African cultural values, which shape individuals' behaviours to become responsible citizens who are able to contribute to the social cohesion and political stability of the country.

Another contributing factor to the promotion of DCE, is the inclusion of all citizens in the decisions regarding the development of policies, irrespective of their education background, social or economic status. This is because a transformation cannot succeed if the will of the ordinary citizens who implement the policies, is missing (Teodorovic, 2008:30). Therefore, the development of policies should involve all stakeholders, directly or through their representatives, so that everyone can have the opportunity to put forward the most pressing problems within education. It is important to note that the representatives and political officials, who are trusted to make decisions in Namibia, should not be regarded as knowing all the problems and expectations of their fellow citizens. In this respect, they need to solicit views from the citizens who are affected by the results of the policies, in order to develop policies that are responsive to the needs of the public. On the same note, Kymlicka and Norman (2000:8) argue that the decisions of government in a democratic country should be taken publicly, through free and open discussions.

Moreover, the findings of this study show that there is a need for the Namibian education system to utilise democratic deliberation during decision-making processes. This is because democratic deliberation encourages participants to learn from one another whilst enabling them to recognise their individual and collective misconceptions, and develop new understanding and knowledge that lead to the development of successful policies (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:157). Through democratic deliberation, participants establish an understanding of themselves, whilst also developing a thorough understanding of the good governance of the community in which they live (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:65). By undergoing this process, participants are able to make sound

decisions, whilst developing policies that meet the demands of the public. More importantly, decisions that are reached through democratic deliberation, where everyone is listened to, has greater legitimacy than it would have had through any other method of decision-making (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000:129). At the same time, deliberative democracy helps participants to develop the virtues of citizenship which the Namibian government is aiming for, and encourages citizens to consider political issues in a spirited public manner (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:30). It is also important to note that deliberation only becomes democratic when it accommodates all the people, directly or through their representatives, who are affected by the decision. Therefore, Namibia as a democratic country, needs to demonstrate explicitly the values of both democracy and that of *ubuntu* through education policies, specifically those supporting teaching and learning, in order for DCE to become a reality in the country. The next sections provide both a summary of recommendations to the Namibian government, as well as for further research.

#### **7.4.1 Recommendations for the Namibian government**

The following recommendations are directed to the Namibian government, in order to improve the promotion of DCE in the country. The Namibian government needs to:

- include all stake holders who are effected by decisions, in decision-making processes;
- explicitly demonstrate DCE through education policies, specifically those effecting teaching and learning;
- consider democratic deliberation as the best manner of decision-making in a democratic country;
- take the *ubuntu* philosophy of education as a foundation of education; and
- develop redistribution policies that entail compensatory programmes that give rural schools proportionately more resources than urban schools.

#### **7.4.2 Recommendations for future research**

The scope of this study was limited to the analysis of education policies that regulate teaching and learning in Namibian primary schools, in order to determine how these policies contribute to the promotion of DCE. This prevented me from go inside the classrooms and observe how DCE is being implemented practically. On the same note, I was not able to interview teachers, education officers or anyone who is involved in teaching and learning processes, due to the fact that my focus was only on policies. Therefore, I recommend for further research to focus on the implementation of DCE inside the classrooms at primary school level. Moreover, the literature reviewed indicated

that limited studies have been conducted on DCE and its implications for teaching and learning. In that respect, further research can be carried out on an analysis of policies that support teaching and learning at secondary, as well as at tertiary levels in Namibia.

## **7.5 Conclusion**

It is important for the Namibian education policies that support teaching and learning to articulate an inclusive educational structure which involves all citizens in education activities, so that learners can see the importance of engaging in public discourse, treating all people equally and showing respect to all people, regardless of their educational background, economic or social positions. This will help future citizens to develop a will to engage in public discourse for the development of the society. In this respect, it is expected for teaching and learning in Namibia to take place in a deliberative way in which freedom, equality and justice are taken into consideration and encourage learners to engage actively with others in order to create good relationships. In that regard, it will assist the learners to become responsible future citizens. This is because democracy in Namibia will not be realised in the absence of responsible citizens. The way pedagogic practices take place, the school structure, and the availability of resources, as well as learners' relationships with peers and teachers have a strong impact on learners' ability to learn, their motivation and sense of belonging, which influence their life beyond school.

Moreover, the lack of teaching and learning materials poses a challenge to quality education in the Namibian primary education, and needs to be addressed systemically in order to reduce poverty and income disparities in the country. It is important to note that quality education for all does not only benefit individuals, but also results in a society which is more equitable, wherein everyone can improve their social and economic situations, thus contributing to the economic growth of the country. Without quality education, Namibia will remain an economically dependent country, and its dream to be listed among high-income countries will not be realised.

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